

The New Records

Israel in Egypt - p. 7

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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THIS is the 241st issue of this little bulletin. With it we begin the twenty-first volume. Many of our readers have been with us since Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1933) and quite a few of them have kept a complete file of all issues. We know this because occasionally a copy goes astray in the mail and they hasten to write for another copy stating that their files are complete except for that one number. We hope that the present volume will prove as interesting to these oldtimers as the previous ones.

During the last few months we have been advertising THE NEW RECORDS in a number of leading newspapers throughout the country including The New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, Boston Herald, Philadelphia Inquirer, Detroit Free Press, Cleveland Press, Minneapolis Star Tribune and Washington Times Herald. Hundreds of new subscribers have been secured by this means and we take this opportunity of welcoming them with the hope that they will continue to find our little bulletin of value.

Last month we included a renewal blank with each copy mailed, and so many renewals were received that it has been impossible for us to check our mailing list. We are, therefore, carrying over all of our subscribers, whether they renewed or not. We cannot continue this practice beyond this month, so if you have not as yet sent in your renewal, you should do so at once in order that you will not miss any issues.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NEW LP RELEASES

Sorry, Wrong Number. Agnes Moorehead, with supporting cast. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-6022) \$3.35. TNR Sept. '47).

R. Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier* (highlights). Tiana Lemnitz (soprano), Kurt Böhme (bass), Saxon State Orchestra—Kempe. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7062) \$5.95. (TNR June '51).

Mozart: *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (highlights). Wilma Lipp (soprano), Walther Ludwig (tenor), et al, with Chorus of Vienna State Opera and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-458) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '50).

Gounod: *Faust* (highlights). Geori-Boué (soprano), Georges Noré (tenor), Roger Bourdin (baritone), Ernest Frank (bass), Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus—Beecham. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1100) \$5.72. (TNR May '49).

Verdi: *Aïda* (highlights). Maria Caniglia (soprano), Ebe Stignani (mezzo-soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Gino Bechi (baritone), Italo Tajo (bass), Chorus and Orchestra of the Opera House (Rome)—Serafin. 1-1/2" disc (*V-LCT-1101) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '49).

Puccini: *Tosca* (highlights). Maria Caniglia (soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Armando Borgioli (baritone), Chorus and Orchestra of the Royal Opera House (Rome)—Fabritiis. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1102) \$5.72. (TNR Jan. '40).

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. One side, and Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in D, K. 218. Fritz Kreisler (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1117) \$5.72. (TNR Dec. '35 and Jan. '40).

Popular Overtures and Dances. Columbia Broadcasting Symphony—Barlow. 1-12" disc (*CRL 3030) \$3.08. (Formerly single discs: see TNR Vol. 8, No. 11; Vol. 9, Nos. 3, 7, 9; Vol. 10, No. 3).

HIGH FIDELITY RECORDS

Below are listed several records that devotees of high fidelity phonographs have found to make quite thrilling demonstrations of their wide range equipment. The musical value of these discs may or may not be great, and no attempt has been made to make

the list all-inclusive; however, all are extended range recordings which will bring out the best in a "hi-fi" system:

Dancers of Bali. Gamelan Orchestra from the Village of Pliatan, Bali, directed by Anak Agung Gde Mandera. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4618) \$5.45. (TNR Feb. '53).

The Great Barrelhouse Piano. Played on a nickelodeon. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1035) \$4. (TNR Feb. '53).

The Pipe Organ. (Vols. I & II). Michael Cheshire, playing the Wurlitzer organ of the Richmond (Va.) Mosque. 2-10" discs (*SOT-1050/1) \$4 each. (TNR Feb. '53).

Selected Works of Varèse. Various instrumental groups conducted by Frederick Waldman. 1-12" disc (*EMS-401) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '51).

Stravinsky: Petrouchka. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-130) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '50).

Respighi: The Pines of Rome. One side, and **Respighi: The Fountains of Rome.** Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Argeo Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5167) \$5.95. (TNR Mar. '53).

Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Charles Münch, with Eduard Niesberger (organ). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4120) \$5.45. (TNR Aug. '48).

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50009) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '52).

Tschaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50008) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '52).

Tschaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 in B minor, Op. 74. ("Pathétique"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4544) \$5.45. (TNR Nov. '52).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Our studio has been flooded with releases of overtures, waltzes and the like recently released by several manufacturers. Due to severe space limitations we cannot consider each issue separately; but because we feel that many of our readers would like to know of the release of these extremely popular items, we are listing them below.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda—Dance of the Hours. And **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Overture. Orchestra of La Scala Opera conducted by Armando La Rosa Parodi. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-1) \$1.58.

Verdi: Forza del Destino—Overture. One side, and **Donizetti: Don Pasquale**—Overture. Orchestra of La Scala Opera conducted by Armando La Rosa Parodi. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-2) \$1.58.

Auber: Fra Diavolo—Overture. One side, and **Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia**—Overture. Orchestras conducted by Karl Elmendorff and Arthur Rother. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-3) \$1.58.

Strauss: 1001 Nights—Overture. One side, and **Strauss: 1001 Nights**—Tenor Waltz. Herbert Ernst Groh (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-4) \$1.58.

Strauss: Wiener Blut—Overture. One side, and **Strauss: Wiener Blut**—Waltz and Duet. Traute-Richter (soprano) and Sebastian Hauser (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of the Berlin Civic Opera conducted by Hans Lenzer. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-5) \$1.58.

Moussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-6) \$1.58.

Prokofiev: Love for Three Oranges—Suite. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-7) \$1.58.

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake—Waltzes (Acts I & II). Orchestra of the National Theatre (Prague) conducted by Jaroslav Krombholc. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-8) \$1.58.

Berlioz: Roman Carnival Overture. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Lamoureux conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-9) \$1.58.

Falla: Three-Cornered Hat—3 Dances. L'Orchestre de l'Opera-Comique (Paris) conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-11) \$1.58.

Gounod: Faust—Ballet Music. L'Orchestre du Theatre National de l'Opera de Paris conducted by George Sebastian. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-12) \$1.58.

Prokofiev: Russian Overture, Op. 72. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Steinkopf. 1-7" disc (\$UR-UREP-16) \$1.58.

Lehar: Merry Widow—Overture. One side, and **Lehar: Gold and Silver Waltz.** Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra conducted by Franz Lehar. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9003) \$2.95.

Offenbach: Orpheus in Hades—Overture. One side, and **Offenbach: La Belle Hélène**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9004) \$2.95.

Suppé: Light Cavalry—Overture. One side, and **Suppé: Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9005) \$2.95.

ORCHESTRA



Mahler: Symphony No. 5 in C-sharp minor. Three sides, and **Mahler: Symphony No. 10 in F sharp —Adagio.** Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-207) \$11.90.

Last month Columbia re-issued on LP the Mahler *Fifth* under Bruno Walter (*C-SL-171), which includes as a coupling on the fourth side eight songs sung by Desi Halban. The present set under Scherchen has more than a five years newer recording technique. The interpretive approach of the conductors is quite a bit different. Walter has a more comprehensive view of the whole canvas and does not give the sudden effects that Scherchen does. Scherchen is more dramatic and generally more lucid. The net result would seem to be a better survey by Walter, but Scherchen is more meticulous. The score hangs together better and is not as overblown under Walter; it often has more momentary interest under Scherchen. We cannot say which would appeal more to the average music lover, because we doubt whether most of them will be drawn to the work. The Mahlerites will have their own ideas about who does more justice to this score. Mahlerites will find the coupling in the Scherchen set highly interesting. It is the *Adagio* of his 10th symphony, the first movement, at least the one which Mahler designated as the first at the time of his death. It is the only one written out fully in the form of an orchestral score. This music is interesting because it is a completely new departure from Mahler's traditional style.

The *Fifth Symphony* is purely symphonic, unlike the three preceding ones which contain vocal sections. It consists of five movements which, however, form essentially three sections. The central section around which the work is anchored is the third movement, a very extensive *Scherzo*, which might best be described as a study in various *Landler* rhythms. This large-scale work uses a huge orchestral body in individual clusters of sound in which the brass dominates heavily. Westminster has recorded this work splendidly, being among their best issues to date. S.

Spoehr: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 78. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Frankfurt conducted by Georg Schlemm. 1-10" disc (*URP-5008) \$4.75.

One of Spohr's symphonies has finally found its way to records, and many will now hear a Spohr symphony for the first time. Our grandfathers heard his symphonies frequently for they were performed rather regularly until shortly after the turn of the century. But Spohr is now rather *passé* and considered too sentimental. It is true that his thematic matter was often not worthy of the skill used to develop it. He was one of the founders of the Romantic period in music and his influence on its

development was of the greatest importance. Noted as a violin virtuoso and as a conductor, Spohr will never have a prominent place as a composer. We must think of him as one who contributed to the general scheme of composition as it has developed, but not as one of the major contributors of any era.

The thematic material of the *Symphony No. 3* is no gold mine, but as usual with Spohr, it is worked over quite nicely, and there is a directness and transparency which are pleasing. It is easy to listen to, although it leaves no strong impression; it is not over-wrought nor bombastic—in fact, it could stand more fire and thunder in spots. It is just a pleasant piece of music by a nice old gentleman. The form of the work is conventional, four movements, the weakest of which we think is the *Scherzo* because it is too heavy for a good contrasting *scherzo*. Georg Schlemm and his orchestra provide a carefully prepared and convincing account of the score played with conviction as well as polish. Reproduction is good, with a little of *Urania's* string sizzle in evidence at times. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor ("Tragic"). Mozarteum Orchestra of Salzburg conducted by Wolfgang Freilassing. 1-12" disc (*ORFEO LP-10) \$5.95.

Schubert—arr. Weingartner: Symphony No. 7 in E. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-10" disc (*VAN-VRS-427) \$5.95.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("The Great") (B. & H. No. 7). Three sides, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G.** Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-119) \$11.70.

Composed in Schubert's nineteenth year, there is little in the music to justify the composer's own subtitle "Tragic." No jury of a hundred musicians would guess the nickname on a hearing of the music. The present recording of the *Fourth* brings out the dash and vigor of this work with unflagging zeal. It has not quite the solidity of Klemperer's reading (*VX-PL-7860), but it moves forward with conviction and is well played by the Mozarteum Orchestra. The reproduction is as bright and shrill as we care to hear. The first side of our disc was not pressed deeply enough (judging from appearances) and tracked impossibly bad, but the second side was fine. Better check your copy if you decide to get one.

The Schubert *Seventh Symphony*, in E major, is truly his seventh. It was written in sketch form in the year 1821. In 1934 Felix Weingartner reconstructed the score, leaving the second and third movements untouched, and "tightening up" the first and last (i.e., shortening them a little). When you hear this work you can believe that it fits well between the *Fourth*, *Fifth*, *Sixth* and the "Unfinished." It has more of the earlier symphonies than

of those which followed, but it unmistakably heralds the later and greater works. In itself it is a beautiful work which is worth some performances—more than as a novelty or curiosity. The performance offered here is a superb one and very well recorded. This disc is well worth investigation.

The recording of the Schubert Ninth is one of the finest things Furtwängler has on discs, which is saying a lot, for some of his recordings are among the greatest. Any of Furtwängler's tendencies to tamper, tinker, or otherwise be capricious with the score have been entirely done away with in this magnificent reading! Here the conductor is clearly at the service of the composer, and we have an interpretation that must rank with the greatest of this work. This reading has not the bite and wallop of Toscanini, nor quite the searing intensity of Walter, but it has a fusion of everything good and just in a performance of this work that gives it a wonderful balance. The reproduction is full and rich, making this a set to be highly recommended. The Haydn 88th gets model treatment also to complete this well nigh perfect album, which features as well orchestral playing of the highest order by the renowned Berlin Philharmonic. S.

First Chair. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4629) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Clarke: *Trumpet Voluntary* in D (Samuel Krauss, trumpet); Griffes: *Poem for Flute and Orchestra* (William Kincaid, flute); Handel: *Concerto No. 3 in G minor for Oboe and Strings* (Marcel Tabuteau, oboe); Phillips: *Concert Piece for Bassoon and Strings* (Sol Schoenbach, bassoon); Weber: *Adagio and Rondo for Violoncello and Orchestra* (Lorne Monroe, violoncello); Chabrier: *Larghetto for Horn and Orchestra* (Mason Jones, French horn); Beethoven: *Romance No. 2 in F for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 50* (Jacob Krachmalnick, violin); Weber: *Concertino for Clarinet and Orchestra* (Anthony Gigliotti, clarinet).

An orchestra which is generally acknowledged as the greatest in the world, in fact, the greatest the world has ever known, is necessarily made up of some fine instrumentalists. The Philadelphia Orchestra contains many members who are great soloists, but the first chair men who are the leaders of their respective sections and the orchestral "soloists" are among the great virtuosi of our day. Flutist William Kincaid and oboist Marcel Tabuteau are among the best known performers of their instruments. Concertmaster Jacob Krachmalnick and 'cellist Lorne Monroe are young artists who have recently joined the orchestra; but their proficiency as demonstrated on this disc gives evidence of what sterling performers they are. All of the artists who perform in this concert turn in performances that would be hard to better. We could not single out any one for special mention; all are superb. Ormandy's accom-

paniments add the final touch which makes this disc truly outstanding, and one that belongs in every library of fine records. This record is sold for the benefit of The Philadelphia Orchestra Pension Fund.

While the musical selections offered are display pieces for the solo instruments, the choice of this music is so good that it does not result in a monotonous series of technically tricky pieces of questionable merit. Every selection is a masterpiece in its form and there are a number of schools represented from Clarke and Handel through contemporary styles. Such a choice as the Beethoven *Romance*, rather than a fireworks display for violinistic prowess, contributes to the effectiveness and musical value of this program. We would mention the exceptionally fine reproduction and microphone placement which gives each instrument a faithful character and good perspective with the accompaniment. S.

Respighi: Fountains of Rome. One side, and

Respighi: Pines of Rome. Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Argeo Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5167) \$5.95.

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936) was indisputably one of the greatest masters of the orchestra since Berlioz. Richard Strauss is generally considered to be Berlioz' successor; but, for this reviewer he lacked the temperament, the volatility necessary to achieve greatness in this field.

The two tone poems recorded here are a direct result of Respighi's love affair with the Eternal City, an affair that lasted twenty-three years. The *Fountains of Rome* consists of a musical description and impression of four fountains: those of the Villa Giulia, the Trevi, the Triton and those at the Villa Medici. It is a very poetic work, sensuous, colorful, evocative and always musically interesting. Without resorting to direct imitation Respighi penned passages that suggest the passing of cattle at dawn, iridescent bubbles at the Triton fountain, Neptune's triumphal procession at noon (Trevi) and deep melancholy at dusk near the Villa Medici. The piece is masterful, both as to music and as to sound.

I Pini di Roma, again in four sections, was written eight years after the *Fountains*, in 1924. The pines treated musically are those at the Villa Borghese, near a catacomb, the Gianicolo and along the Appian Way. Much the same treatment is used here as in the fountains but this is a more robust work; there is less poetry. There are several interesting passages, notably the use of an early Christian hymn tune and the unusual practice of scoring for the phonograph; Respighi calls for a record of the song of a nightingale in the third section (*Pines of the Gianicolo*).

Both scores call for large orchestras and in *I Pini di Roma* six buccine are employed in addition to the usual forces. For the curious it may be pointed out that a buccine is an imitation of an old type Roman wind instrument. All this has been recorded in brilliant fashion by Westminster engineers. The use of

variable pitch (of the record grooves) has enabled them to produce a record that is, beyond a doubt, the finest yet made. This is largely due to the higher volume level possible and the result is startling in its realism. Quadri's direction is imaginative and sensitive. The Vienna State Opera Orchestra sounds better than this reviewer can ever recall. All in all an astonishing record, worth owning on all counts: artistically, musically and technically. W.

Rachmaninoff: Symphonic Dances, Op. 45.

Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4621) \$5.45.

This is a recording of prime importance. Here we have a splendid performance of Rachmaninoff's last composition. *Symphonic Dances, Op. 45* dates from 1940 and was first played by the Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy on 3 January 1941. Since that time it has appeared on the programs of many important orchestras both here and abroad. It was dedicated to Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra.

This attractive work is not really a series of dances but rather a composition in three movements in which the spirit of the dance abounds throughout. The first movement is marked *Non allegro*; the second with its waltz theme is an *Andante con moto*; and the Finale, after a slow start, becomes an *Allegro vivace*. It is a work of wide variety and one that immediately gains the attention of the listener and holds his interest to the last measure. You may not care for it, but you certainly cannot say that it is banal or dull.

Early Italian Music. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra with Brass Choir and A Cappella Chorus. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1721) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1721) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Concerto Grosso in D minor* (Vivaldi); *Tu Mancavi a Tormentarmi, Crudelissima Speranza* (Cesti); *Nocturne, Marche* (Lully); *Gagliardi* (Frescobaldi); *Adoramus Te, O bone Jesu* (Palestrina); *Canzon Quarti Toni a 15, In Ecclesiis Benedicite Domino* (Gabrieli).

The purists may say that the music on this LP disc is more Stokowski than Early Italian and we are not going to argue the point. We are going to say that we have not heard a record in a long, long time that has contained such a wealth of highly enjoyable music—music that is always in the best of taste—music with enough variety that it never becomes monotonous. After each selection, one awaits the next piece with high anticipation and is sorry when the record side comes to an end. There is no question but that Stokowski has spent endless hours of research in selecting the compositions for this record, nor that in his orchestrations and arrangements he has hit a new high in musical craftsmanship of this character. We urge the musically discerning not to miss this very delightful disc.

Debussy: Prelude a l'Apres-midi d'un Faune. One side, and **Dukas: L'Apprenti Sorcier.** Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-26) \$2.85.

Two selections that have always been popular with Philadelphia Orchestra fans are included on this modestly priced disc—it should go to the head of the best sellers list in a hurry.



CHAMBER MUSIC

Thomson: Stabat Mater. (Sung in French). Jennie Tourel (mezzo-soprano) with the New Music String Quartet. And **Thomson: Capital, Capitals.** (Sung in English). Joseph Crawford, Clyde S. Turner (tenors); Joseph James (baritone); William C. Smith (bass); and Virgil Thomson (piano). One side, and **Harrison: Suite for Violoncello and Harp.** Seymour Barab (violin-cello) and Lucille Lawrence (harp). And **Harrison: Suite No. 2 for String Quartet.** New Music String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4491) \$5.45.

Copland: Sextet for String Quartet, Clarinet and Piano (1937). David Oppenheim (clarinet), Leonid Hambro (piano) and the Juilliard String Quartet. One side, and **Kohs: Chamber Concerto for Viola and String Nonet** (1949). Ferenc Molnar (viola) and string nonet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4492) \$5.45.

Piston: Sonatina for Violin and Harpsichord. Alexander Schneider (violin) and Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord). One side, and **Cage: String Quartet** (1950). New Music String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4495) \$5.45.

Columbia proposes to release a batch of recordings each year of American music; this group is part of the first release. A committee consisting of Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Henry Cowell, William Schuman, and Goddard Lieberson has selected the music to be recorded and they have sought to avoid duplication of works already available to the public in recorded form. Chamber music has been chosen as the present repertory of the project, because that is the field that has hitherto received the least attention from recording companies. They have made available a remarkable group of scores which will add to a sadly deficient section of the recorded music of our country. Whether or not the public will acquire these records remains to be seen, but we would predict a very modest commercial success for this venture.

If the music at hand does nothing more, it probably mirrors only too faithfully the times in which we live. You can supply your own definition of what this portrays, but it would come under the general heading of changing, uncertain, and somewhat troubled times.

We cannot discuss all of these works at length. One thumbnail, or in-a-phrase, opinion of them runs something like this: Copland is good, worthy, and

interesting music; Piston is all of that and even more pleasing to the ear; Kohs has something to say and does it convincingly; Harrison is clever and pleasing to the ear in a studied and modern way; Thomson (who generally appeals to us very much) is off the beam in this pair of peculiar works; and Cage is in another world entirely—we could not make head nor tail out of this—maybe they played it with the score upside down.

Whatever the opinions of the music, Columbia is to be congratulated and heartily praised for its effort on behalf of American music. The performances are all excellent, and faithful to the composers' wishes we are told, and the reproduction is of the best.

S.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-630) \$4.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Walter Gieseking (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert van Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4623) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Denis Matthews (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3037) \$3.08.

The LP lists are rather light in entries on the Beethoven Second Concerto, which is really the first one the master wrote, although it was published after the First (and after a revision). Backhaus and Krauss are a strong team, and when it comes to their doing Beethoven, the results are apt to be first rate. In this work they are excellent and produce what is easily the best of the recorded versions. They manage to keep this work in the proper framework. It is a well-proportioned and beautifully executed performance, with fine reproduction.

Columbia is in the odd position of competing with itself with the latest pair of entries in the "Emperor" listing, which now contains nearly a dozen versions of widely varying merit. Columbia offers the same program notes and the same accompanying orchestra, but two different types of reproduction as well as different soloists in this dual release. An over-all impression is that Gieseking enjoys brighter, probably newer, reproduction, while Matthews has typical English recording of the full-blown variety. Matthews is by no means a poor second when it comes to interpretation and performance. Gieseking is more authoritative, but Matthews conceives the work on a larger scale. These are both good performances, but neither is better than Horowitz-Reiner (*V-LM-1718), Serkin-Ormandy (*C-ML-4373), or Curzon-Szell (*L-LL-114), among those with modern recording; or Schnabel of an earlier era (*V-LCT-1015). There

are so many from which to make a choice that in most cases, one will pick his favorite artist. We recommend Horowitz, Serkin, or Curzon as the best of the many available.

S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 10 in E-flat, K. 365. Amparo and José Iturbi (pianos) with RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by José Iturbi. Four sides, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466.** José Iturbi (piano) conducting the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1717) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1717) \$5.72.

Both of these concertos are remakes of previous versions which the Iturbis made for Victor some years ago. This time we have the RCA Victor Orchestra as the accompanying instrument, with José keyboard-conducting for both works. Iturbi has always favored Mozart and has acquired something of a reputation for performing the more popular Mozart works. His performances are usually marked by fine finger dexterity, clear, clean playing with a cool, bright manner. There is little caressing sentiment and plenty of percussive tone for Mozart. It is a type of playing which appeals to some folks, but which many Mozartians do not find attractive. Serkin, Schnabel, Kempff, and Lili Krauss all have worthy recordings which present Mozart's 20th Concerto in a different manner. Our preference for a recording of this lovely work is the Schnabel disc (*V-LHMV-1012), which is Mozart playing at its best.

The two-piano concerto has two other versions in the catalogs, an older one by Vronsky and Babin and a more recent one by Gianoli and Badura-Skoda with the Vienna orchestra under Scherchen (*WEST-WL-5095). The Westminster disc will probably fill the bill nicely for those who desire this work. It is coupled with another two-piano concerto of Mozart. Unless the coupling of the present disc appeals strongly to you, we would not recommend it as a best buy of the music offered. If you wish to "kill two birds with one stone" you will get accurate performances and good reproduction from the Iturbis.

S.

CHORAL



Harvard Glee Club Recital. Harvard Glee Club conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth. 1-10" disc (*CAMBRIDGE CRC-101) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Supplicationes* (Palestrina); *Iustorum animae* (Byrd); *O Maria, Diana stella* (15th cent. Laude); *Tibi laus, tibi gloria* (Lassus); *Miserere mei* (Victoria); *Confitemini Domino* (Palestrina); *Adoramus te* (Anerio).

This diversified offering of Renaissance choral music should provide devotees of this school with one of their most valued discs; it should also incite the interest of those who heretofore have found pre-baroque music cold and unexciting. The special

attraction of the recording, perhaps a unique one, (beyond its excellent performance) rests with the almost revelatory authenticity it achieves through the use of a highly resonant recording hall comparable to that of the stone churches of the Renaissance. The rich texture of the music benefits from the warm, colorfully resonant sound; and the total effect sustains an aural opulence that we do not think has ever before been heard on records.

Schütz: Passion According to St. Matthew (complete). (Sung in German). Max Meili (tenor) with supporting soloists and Combined Berlin Chamber Choirs conducted by Helmut Koch. Three sides, and **Schütz: Symphonia sacra No. 9** ("Frohlocket mit Händen) and **Schütz: Symphonia sacra No. 10** ("Lobet den Herrn"). Max Meili (tenor) with strings and organ accompaniment. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-519/20) \$11.90.

X Handel: Israel in Egypt (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, combined Berlin Chamber Choirs and Berlin Symphony Orchestra conducted by Helmut Koch. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-BG-521/2) \$11.90.

Heinrich Schütz (1585-1672), as has been noted before in these columns, was one of the great musicians of all time. The work recorded here, the *Passion According to St. Matthew*, is a tremendously moving and sincere setting of the last days of Christ on earth. It lacks some of the overwhelming drama that Bach gave to his version of the story, but it makes up for this lack (if lack it really is) by its almost incredible use of limited forces. There is no instrumental accompaniment, the effects being achieved by the human voice alone, and it is to the credit of Herr Koch and his forces that the performance is convincing from beginning to end. Max Meili, as the Evangelist, sings the recitative passages with a wealth of expression, and the soloists, particularly Herbert Rungehagen as Jesus, Bernard Michaelis as Judas and Horst Wilhelm as Peter, are uniformly excellent. The pathos, the almost unearthly quality that Schütz poured into the music, are realized in Helmut Koch's sensitive and scholarly direction. No one interested in choral music or music of the baroque period should be without this sterling performance and recording. Comprehensive notes and the German-English text are welcome dividends.

Very different, yet cast in the same heroic mold, is Bach Guild's recording of Handel's epic setting of the biblical story of *Israel in Egypt*. As befits so different a theme, here is a work that has a large instrumental accompaniment and massive choruses. Essentially the same forces are used, and Helmut Koch demonstrates his sound musicianship by capably conducting the work in Handelian fashion. The wonderful "plague" choruses that tell of the "waters turning into blood," of the "flies, lice and

locusts," of hailstones and fire, and finally of the smiting of the first-born of Egypt are strikingly realized. They are quite unique—there is nothing in music like them. The soloists are usually adequate, sometimes fine, especially the men. The choral passages, of which there are many, are executed with precision and feeling.

Both works have been previously recorded but these new versions are technically and artistically superior.

W.

Howe: Choruses. The Howard University Choir directed by Warner Lawson. One side, and **Howe: Songs for Soprano.** Katharine Hansel accompanied by Theodore Schaefer (piano). And

Howe: Songs for Baritone. Harold Ronk (baritone) accompanied by Theodore Schaefer (piano). 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-13) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mein Herz; O ma Douleur; Fragment; O Proserpina; When I Died in Berners Street* (soprano). *Lullaby for a Forester's Child; The Rag Picker; Innisfree; To the Unknown Soldier* (baritone). *Williamsburg Sunday; Music When Soft Voices Die; Chain Gang Song; The Horseman; Cavaliers; Song of Ruth* (chorus).

Vaughan Williams: (5) Mystical Songs. Harold Ronk (baritone) with the Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church directed by Theodore Schaefer (organ). One side, and **Buxtehude: Jesu, Joy and Treasure.** Katharine Hansel (soprano), George Barratt (tenor), John Tompkins (bass) with the Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church directed by Theodore Schaefer (organ). And **Buxtehude: Choral Prelude** ("Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"). Theodore Schaefer (organ). 1-12" disc (*DEN-DR-2) \$5.95.

Two of the smaller (but better) producers of LP discs release, this month, recordings of more than passing interest. The first is a collection of the vocal and choral works of the American composer, Mary Howe. This issue supplements a previous release of her chamber music and thus makes available to the record buying public a fine cross-section of this contemporary American composer's work. The songs, nine in number, range from Persian texts, through Shakespeare, Baudelaire, Yeats and Elinor Wylie, while texts for the choral pieces include settings of Shelly, de la Mare and Masefield. The songs are sung by Katherine Howard (a first class lyric soprano) and Howard Ronk (an above average baritone). The Howard University Choir sings the choruses with vigor, authority and tonal accuracy. Musically, Mary Howe, is modern without being obtrusive about it. She can spin a fine melody and has been able to achieve what few song writers are able to do: to compose a setting that fits the text like a glove. The choral works are also distinctive, both melodically and structurally. This

is definitely a disc for the cognoscenti as well as for the collector of Americana.

Den Recordings, with their second release, issues another record of considerable musical merit. This disc couples two composers, of completely different eras, who are linked, in this instance, by the moods projected by their respective scores. The *Five Mystical Songs* are based on poems by George Herbert (1593-1633) and are titled *Easter; I got me flowers; Love bade me welcome; The Call; and Antiphon*. Herbert was a parish priest of the Church of England, and the poems are, as might be expected, religious in nature. The settings are extremely effective with their use of soloist and chorus and the superb organ accompaniments lend a medieval atmosphere that is very much in character. The *Buxtehude Cantata* is a magnificent work, excellently sung and superbly recorded. As a dividend, the *Choral Prelude* played by Theodore Schaefer is a masterpiece. A fine disc, primarily for the collector who specializes in the unusual, but worthy of investigation by all music lovers. W.

Gesualdo: Italian Madrigals. One side, and **Monteverdi: Italian Madrigals.** The Randolph Singers conducted by David Randolph. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5171) \$5.95.

Motets for Christmas and Other Festivities. The Welch Chorale directed by James B. Welch. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-35) \$5.92.

CONTENTS: *O quam gloriosum* (Victoria); *Hosanna to the Son of David* (Gibbons); *Hodie Christus natus est* (Sweelinck); *Hodie Christus natus est* (Palestrina); *Rorate caeli desuper* (Gregorian); *Rorate caeli desuper* (Palestrina); *Gloria in excelsis* (Weelkes); *Dies sanctificatus* (Byrd); *Dies sanctificatus* (Palestrina); *In splendoribus* (Gregorian); *Resonet in laudibus* (Handl); *Resonet in laudibus* (Gregorian); *O magnum mysterium* (Victoria); *O magnum mysterium* (Byrd).

The pair of discs listed above are devoted to the music of a bygone age and serve to prove, if such proof were necessary, how unchanging and how lasting great art can be. Gesualdo and Monteverdi, the former very poorly represented on records until this release, are two of the great Italian madrigalists. The Randolph Singers, who do a sterling job with both composers, sing hitherto unrecorded madrigals in as near the original form and manner as possible. In addition, the works were selected for their originality and are notable for their daring and "strangeness." The madrigals recorded here are often dissonant, abounding in weird chromatic passages that sound modern even to contemporary ears. An interesting example is quoted in the accompanying notes, comparing a portion of Gesualdo's (1611) *Moro lasso al mio dulol* and a passage from *Die Walküre* (1885). There are, in all, eight madrigals by Gesualdo and seven by Monteverdi. Considerable pains

were taken to simulate 17th century conditions insofar as acoustics were concerned, i.e. to convey the impression of a large hall without having excessive echo that would tend to obscure the vocal line. Scholarly notes and complete texts plus the outstandingly original music make this disc one that belongs in every library of serious music.

Lyrichord and the Welch Chorale submit some fourteen Motets, including four instances of different settings of the same words. Thus, one may hear and compare Sweelinck's version of the *Hodie Christus natus est* with that of Palestrina, and Victoria's *O Magnum mysterium* with William Byrd. Such comparisons are both instructive and fascinating and could only be accomplished through the medium of records. Needless to say, the music is all of the utmost grandeur and is imbued with a deep religious feeling that is almost, if not entirely, without parallel in art. The singing of the Chorale is uniformly good and the approach is both orthodox and intelligent. Excellent recording is the order of the day. W.

Bach: Mass in B minor. (Sung in Latin). Soloists, chorus and Rhineland Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alfred Federer. 3-12" discs in box (*REGENT MG-6000) \$5.67.

This, the third complete recording of Bach's monumental *Mass in B Minor*, costs only about one-third as much as either of the two previous recordings. This is the most important fact about the release and it certainly colors, to a considerable extent, the criticism that follows.

The performance by the Rhineland Symphony and an unnamed chorus is neither very good nor distressingly bad. It falls in between and could be described, at its highest level, as complacent. There are also passages that sound dispirited, as though the music got the best of all concerned. The soloists Hedrich (soprano), Brunner (alto), Bochner (tenor) and Kuntz (bass) are run-of-the-mill vocalists that are usually adequate. Now, despite all this, the set is not a bad value. Bach's glorious music shines through the sometimes shoddy performance like "the body of Copheta's beggar maid through her rags." It is not fair to compare this recording with Westminster's (Scherchen) magnificent job or with RCA Victor's (Shaw) less spectacular one because of the aforementioned price difference.

The records, from a technical angle, are serviceable and easy to listen to; this reviewer, to put it negatively, has heard worse on discs costing three times as much. The surfaces, while somewhat noisier than the more expensive LP's, are not objectionable.

The reader will probably have noticed a reluctance on the part of the writer to condemn the set out of hand and, at the same time, being somewhat cagey about recommending it. Here is a case where the prospective buyer is not only advised to hear the set before purchasing, he is strongly urged to do so—he may be surprised, he may be disappointed—

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

g indicates 45 rpm.

it all depends on one's standards. Monetary considerations aside, the Westminster is still, by all odds, the best.

W.

Prokofiev: Oratorio, Op. 124 ("On Guard for Peace"). Zara Dolokhanova (mezzo-soprano); E. Talanov (boy alto); combined choirs and State Orchestra of the U. S. S. R. conducted by Samuel Samossond. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6003) \$5.95.

On Guard for Peace is another of those State commissioned or State inspired grandiose compositions that Soviet composers turn out on occasion. This time it is Serge Prokofiev and while *On Guard for Peace* is a far better work musically than Shostakovich's *Song of the Forests* (which it superficially resembles) it is still a far cry from the Prokofiev of the two violin concertos, the *Love for Three Oranges* and the *Romeo and Juliet* music.

This work was written in 1950/51 and celebrates the "grim days of World War II . . . Stalingrad . . . the victory . . . the joy of creative labor . . . and (Prokofiev's) firm belief that war shall not be, that the nations of the world will safeguard peace, save civilization, our children, our future." Now, no one in his right mind would quarrel with these ideas, but in view of Russia's actions in the United Nations assembly, the ideologies and thoughts expressed here have a spurious ring.

Musically the piece is typical of the composer. There are melodies, acrid and pungent harmonies, and the over-all effect is one of considerable power. The participating artists are adequate, the chorus and orchestra sing and play with vim and apparent conviction. In an oratorio such as this, however, it is virtually impossible to separate it from its political implications, and from its genesis the work is tainted to this writer's ears. The idea of "trade supplanting bullets and bombs" under communism is as ridiculous as trying to achieve peace by arming to the teeth.

The recording is spotty, fair in some places and definitely poor in others. The record, obviously, insofar as this reviewer is concerned, has little to recommend it. Partisans of the composer are advised to hear it before buying.

W.

OPERA



Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete). (Sung in Italian). Ethel Semser (soprano); Joachim Kerol (tenor); Marie-Thérèse Cahn (contralto); Jean Borthayre (baritone); Lucien Mans, Jacques Linsolas (bassos); Paris Philharmonic Chorus and L'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by René Leibowitz. 3-12" discs in album (*REN-SX-207) \$18.50.

Verdi's *Un Ballo in Maschera*, considered old-fashioned in 1888 by no less a personage than Ber-

nard Shaw, shows, in this recording, surprising modern qualities and a natural vitality. Certainly, as has been noted before in these columns, a mediocre and tasteless performance (of which there are all too many on records these days) can devitalize the finest opera, but when one gets a performance that has above average singing and an *esprit de corps* that is top-notch, then even a work that might be considered old-fashioned (such as *Un Ballo in Maschera*) emerges in all its melodramatic glory.

Renaissance has cast the opera well, having obtained the services of a fine dramatic soprano in the person of Ethel Semser for Amelia. Without such a singer *Un Ballo in Maschera* would be a sad affair. Mme. Semser proves a tower of strength in the glorious aria *Ma dall' arido stela divulsa* and in the equally taxing *Morrò, ma prima in grazie*. Her voice is a large one, and her high notes are thrilling indeed while her lower register takes on an engaging contralto quality. This, in addition to her considerable acting ability makes her performance a compelling one. The tenor is a newcomer to records, one Joachim Kerol, whose large voice is capable of much coloring and expression. In the lower register it takes on baritone timbre and, if some of the high notes are a little pinched they are usually accurate. His work in the famous quintet *E scherzo od è follia* is superb, and the other concerted numbers, particularly the second act duet and in the opening scene, show him to be a singing actor of the first quality. His Ricardo is notable for its sincerity and understanding. Renato is sung by one of the finest of present day baritones, Jean Borthayre. Here is a singer in the grand manner, a French baritone who is neither nasal nor half tenor—a singer who can grasp a foreign style and sing it as a native. Comparisons are dangerous, but the name of Journet kept recurring to this reviewer.

Others in the cast are equally competent but lack of space precludes more than a brief mention of Mme. Cahn's impressive Ulrica, Mlle. Valdarnini's excellent Oscar and the fine singing of Mans and Linsolas as the conspirators. René Leibowitz' direction is magical—he breathes life into the score and makes it real. Fine recording and a readable libretto round out one of the finest Verdi offerings on records.

W.

Mozart: Così fan Tutte (complete). (Sung in Italian). Ina Souez, Luise Helletsgruber, Irene Eisinger (sopranos); Heddle Nash (tenor); Willi Domgraf-Fassbänder, John Brownlee (baritones); Orchestra and Chorus of the Glyndebourne Opera Festival conducted by Fritz Busch. 10-7" discs in box (*V-WCT-6104) \$12.58. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6104) \$17.16.

This is the third of the fabulous Glyndebourne Festival recordings of Mozart operas. Like its predecessors, it is on an extraordinarily high plane artistically and vocally, making other recordings and per-

formances of the same music seem woefully inadequate. In this *Cosi fan Tutte* one hears a sextette of superb Mozart singers, thoroughly rehearsed, placed in an ideal setting and recorded with excellent quality.

Briefly, Mmes. Souez and Helletsgruber have no peers as the wayward ladies; and the music, which is admittedly difficult, is sung with a sense of style, a purity and agility that beggars description. Coupled with this is a sense of the theatre and a knowledge of characterization that makes the sometimes absurd (by modern standards only) libretto very real. Heddle Nash was a very happy choice for Ferrando and he sings like an angel. The late Willi Domgraf-Fassbander had one of the finest baritone voices of his era—smooth, colorful and exquisitely produced. Of John Brownlee, one can only say "Bravo!" He is a real artist, and everything he does, including this magnificent Don Alfonso, is distinguished by a grand manner—aristocratic to the nth degree.

Fritz Busch, whose untimely death robbed music of one of its finest Mozart conductors, welds his forces into an harmonious ensemble that won't be equalled for many years, if ever.

The transfer to LP discs is deftly accomplished, and this issue of *Cosi fan Tutte*'s effervescent music eliminates all competition. Here is a version of the opera that will answer all arguments as to its essential greatness and should be in every record collection. Excellent notes by Walter Legge and a fine libretto are included.

W.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda (complete). (Sung in Italian). Anita Corridori (soprano); Miriam Pirazzini and Rina Cavallari (contraltos); Giuseppe Campora (tenor); Anselmo Colzani (baritone); Fernando Corena (bass); Orchestra and Chorus of La Scala Opera Company (Milan) conducted by Armando la Rosa Parodi. 4-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-229) \$23.80.

Ponchielli: La Gioconda (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Meneghini Callas (soprano); Fedora Barbieri and Maria Amadini (contraltos); Gianni Poggi (tenor); Paolo Silveri (baritone); Giulio Neri (bass); Cetra Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana (Turin) conducted by Antonio Votto. 3-12" discs in album. (*CE-LP-1241) \$17.85.

For sheer blood and thunder it would be difficult to imagine anything more violent, both musically and dramatically, than Ponchielli's only surviving opera *La Gioconda*. It is one of the few "grand" operas holding the stage today and the reasons for its success are not hard to find. There are flowing melodies, black villains, two heroines both fighting over the hero, inquisitions, burning boats, canals, parties—one could go on almost indefinitely—and all are good theatre.

These two recorded performances offer a nice

study in contrasts. One, the Cetra, features a strong (on paper) cast, the other a relatively unknown group of singers. It is the latter performance, however, that emerges as the most listenable and, in the long run, the most artistic. In the title role of the Cetra recording is the much heralded Maria Callas. Perhaps the build-up has been too great, for this reviewer found her performance far too melodramatic, her high notes and her low voice throaty in the extreme. It is a characterization more suitable to Hollywood than to the operatic stage. As Bernard Shaw once wrote of another singer "aided by youth (she) screamed her way through the part." On the other hand, Urania's *Gioconda*, Anita Corridori, gives a musicianly delineation of the unhappy street singer that wears much better. Vocally Maria Callas is far more gifted, but Mme. Corridori is by far the better artist. The same general remarks hold true for Poggi vs. Campora. The latter, despite a throaty voice production, sings a much finer Enzo than his counterpart who forces for his high notes and wobbles on sustained high passages. The two Barnabas, Silveri and Colzani, follow the same pattern as the others. The former bellows and suffers from a noticeable vibrato. Colzani, who was only a fair Don Carlo in Urania's *La Forza del Destino*, emerges as a top-flight Barnaba. Fedora Barbieri and Miriam Pirazinni are both good with the former having more vocal opulence. Corena shades Neri as Alvise although both are excellent. The two conductors are about equal, with this reviewer favoring Parodi because he seems able to keep his singers in line. Urania has the better recording, technically.

Since the Urania set is priced higher than the Cetra (four records as against three) they have arranged that a "bonus" record be supplied to equalize the costs. With the purchase of the Urania set one receives, packed inside the album, a coupon which entitles the owner to select any of the Urania records listed on the reverse side of the coupon as a "bonus." The dealer will accept the coupon as payment for the record selected, and thus, theoretically, the purchaser will not be penalized for paying the higher price.

W.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Iva Pacetti (soprano) and Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala Opera Company (Milan) conducted by Franco Ghione. Fifteen sides, and **Gigli Operatic Recital**. Beniamino Gigli (tenor) with orchestra. 9-7" discs in box (*V-WCT-6010) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6010) \$11.44.

Leoncavallo's operatic thriller has been successfully transferred to LP discs by RCA Victor by utilizing their fine recording, vintage 1935, that featured Beniamino Gigli as the ill-starred and vengeful Canio. Nearly twenty years have elapsed since this performance was recorded; yet it still not only sounds good, it packs a wallop that is missing in other more recent recordings. This is the more surprising

when one considers that Gigli is not usually considered at his best in heroic tenor roles. Nevertheless, his Canio is a first-rate job. His fellow artists, the late Mario Basiola and Iva Pacetti, as Tonio and Nedda, also turn in performances far above the ordinary that rightly place the presentation in the "Treasury" class. Franco Ghione's direction is such that all the drama and passion of the score are brought out without its once becoming unreal or vulgar—no mean feat, incidentally.

The present pressing has been arranged to fit on three sides, leaving room for one of the finest dividends imaginable—three arias by Gigli and a duet wherein he is joined by Dusolina Giannini. The duet, from "Cavalleria Rusticana" (*Tu qui, Santuzza*), is superbly sung by both artists. Chief interest centers on the three arias, however. They are the fabulous recordings made in the late Twenties or early Thirties of *Cielo e mar* from "La Gioconda," *M'appari* from "Martha" and *O paradiso* from "L'Africana." To anyone who will be hearing them for the first time, the outpouring of golden sound will be well-nigh unbelievable.

W.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier (abridged). (Sung in German). Lotte Lehmann (soprano); Maria Olszewska (mezzo-soprano); Victor Madin (baritone); Richard Mayr (bass); Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-6005) \$10.90. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6005) \$11.44.

This legendary recording of Strauss' *Der Rosenkavalier* makes a most successful and welcome reappearance on two LP discs. It is abridged, of course, but the abridgement has been ingeniously effected with the result, as one commentator tersely puts it "while only about half the extremely long score is recorded here, there are few excisions of really important material." This is both true and, at the same time, a very acute comment on Strauss' tendency to pad his scores. The major cut is one of sixty pages in Act 3 covering the farce played on Ochs, the entrance of the Police, Faninal, etc.

The cast is the finest imaginable. Lotte Lehmann has been considered, and rightly so, as the finest interpreter of the Marschallin. It is preserved here in all its glory. Richard Mayr was Strauss' choice for Ochs but was unable to create the role due to prior commitments. His performance here demonstrates the fact that he had no peers in the role. Olszewska's Octavian is a thing of beauty—utterly charming. Elisabeth Schumann as Sophie is girlish, ingenious and perfectly cast. Others in the cast are of high calibre, and Robert Heger's direction is authoritative.

The original recording took place in the early 1930's (released in this country in 1934, reviewed in TNR Mar. '34) and, for all its age, sounds very good indeed. This *Rosenkavalier* has no competition

despite the existence of two complete LP versions. There is an air about it, a feeling of well being, that is lacking in the others.

No libretto is supplied, but the booklet furnished outlines the plot, shows the omissions, and includes a fine article on the opera by Lotte Lehmann. W.

VOCAL

A Tribute to Lotte Lehmann. Lotte Lehmann (soprano) with piano accompaniment. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1108) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1108) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Die Verschweigung*, *An Chloe* (Mozart); *Ungeduld*, *Im Abendrot*, *Der Wegweiser*, *Die Krähe*, *Täuschung*, *Mut*, *Die Nebensonnen*, *Der Lindenbaum*, *Die Kartenlegerin*, *Alte Laute*, *Waldesgespräch* (Schubert); *Du Bist wie eine Blume*, *Frühlingsnacht* (Schumann); *Therese*, *Meine liebe ist grün*, *Der Tod das ist die Kugle Nacht* (Brahms); *Für Musik*, *Gute Nacht* (Franz).

It seems almost incredible to this reviewer that Lotte Lehmann should have reached the "tribute" stage. To be sure, she really deserves the accolade—what worries this corner is the passage of time! These selections were made in the period 1935-40 and, at the risk of seeming trite, it does seem only yesterday. Now Mme. Lehmann is enjoying a richly deserved retirement—and yet, how calmly one accepts the miracle that enables us to hear her musically performances of the magnificent *lieder* re-issued on this fascinating record.

Chief interest centers around the wonderful singing (singing, as we have had occasion to point out before, is more than singing the notes correctly, it is more than beautiful vocalizing) of the songs from *Die Winterreise*. There are six of them, each exquisitely realized and projected with sure artistry and perfect expression. The real heart-break in *Der Wegweiser*, the bleakness of *Die Krähe* and the desolation inherent in *Der Nebensonnen* are presented in a manner that justifies the use of a phrase, often loosely applied, that of "immortal" performances.

Three songs by Brahms and a pair each by Mozart, Schumann and Wolf, plus five more Schubert *lieder* complete a disc that is unique. Each of them is polished like a jewel and leaves one with an impression that will last. This is accomplished through the medium of Mme. Lehmann's sincerity and essentially human approach to the music. She gets at the essence of the song—each performance is a true re-creation of both the poet's and the composer's intentions.

It is a pity that RCA Victor did not see fit to include a leaflet giving the translation and text of the songs; it would have cost very little and would have added considerably to the listener's enjoyment and appreciation. Vincent Sheean's essay is excellent. The reproduction, when one admits the technical limitations of 1935-40, is quite good. W.



Schlusnus Sings (Vol. 3). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) accompanied by Sebastian Peschko (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9622) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *An die Leyer, Lied eines Schifffers an die Dioskuren* (Schubert); *Nachtgang, Freundliche Vission* (R. Strauss); *Der Wachtelschlag, Andenken* (Beethoven); *Von ewiger Liebe, Der Gang zum Lieben, Am Sonntag Morgen, Feldeinsamkeit, Die Mainacht* (Brahms); *Fussreise, Auch kleine Dinge* (Wolf).

Schlusnus Sings (Vol. 4). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9623) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Der Wanderer, Wobin?, Der Musensohn* (Schubert); *Winterliebe, Traum durch die Dämmerung, Ich trage meine Minne, Zueignung* (R. Strauss); *Wanderlied* (Schumann); *Aus der Jugendzeit* (Radecke); *Am Rhein* (Humperdinck); *Die Uhr, Tom der Reimer* (Loewe).

Muzio Song Recital. Claudia Muzio (soprano) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4634) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Se tu m'ami* (Pergolesi); *Spirate pur spirate, O del mio amato ben* (Donaudy); *Umbra di nube, Ave Maria* (Refice); *La ninna nanna della Vergine* (Reger); *Beau soir* (Debussy); *Bonjour Suzon, Les filles de Cadiz* (Delibes); *C'est mon ami* (Cristi).

The success of the two LP discs (Vols. I and II) (*D-DL-9620/1) issued in December 1952 containing recordings by the great lieder singer Heinrich Schlusnus has probably prompted Decca to hurry along Vols. III and IV. They are now available and it would seem that all that is necessary is to say that they rate fully with the earlier releases. . . . We are glad to announce that Columbia has transferred some recordings of the almost legendary Claudia Muzio to a 12-inch LP record. Miss Muzio made these recordings in 1935 just about a year before her untimely death. Here is an example of an operatic diva of first rank who was also an excellent singer of songs. The present disc definitely proves that fact.

Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin, Op. 25. (Sung in German). Walther Ludwig (tenor) accompanied by Michael Rauchisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9648) \$5.85.

Schubert: Schwanengesang. (Sung in German). Petre Munteanu (tenor) accompanied by Franz Holetschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5165) \$5.95.

Two Schubert "song cycles" one real, the other contrived, are issued this month. Schubert's *Die schöne Müllerin* is making its third appearance on LP with this Decca release; previous recordings have been made by Singher and Schiottz. Walter Ludwig and his accompanist, Michael Rauchisen, do a very fine job indeed with the music. Herr Ludwig sings

in an agreeable tenor and also with a fine understanding of both music and text (very necessary this, for they are very closely interwoven). The performance is notable, also, for the excellent phrasing and capital choice of tempi throughout. The songs are taken at a leisurely pace that emphasizes their lyric romanticism. It is a highly commendable presentation superior to both previously issued recordings. The drawbacks are two in number, neither musical, however. First, no texts are supplied although the songs are annotated, and second, more than usual surface noise was evident in the review copy.

The *Schwanengesang* is a group of songs that some suppose Schubert intended publishing as a unit but died before the project was completed. The publisher, Diabelli, gathered together the manuscripts and pinned the dreadful title *Schwanengesang* on them. These songs, then, are sung on the Westminster disc by a young Roumanian tenor, Petre Munteanu. Somehow the affair does not come off. Munteanu has an odd voice (on this record, in all events) that changes color throughout its range. His pianissimo singing is very nice; but when he opens up, his intonation becomes faulty, the voice takes on a harsh quality, almost "white," that is definitely unpleasant. In addition to this, such songs as *Der Doppelganger, Die Stadt* and *Aufenthalt* are beyond him, and they misfire completely. The very intimate recording (Munteanu's voice seems about six inches from one's ears) is not calculated to cover any defects in its production. Franz Holetschek's accompaniments are well considered and deftly accomplished. Texts and copious notes are furnished.

W.

Songs of Beethoven and Schubert. Elena Nikolaidi (contralto) accompanied by Jan Behr (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4628) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: (6) *Sacred Songs, Op. 48; Bitten, Die Liebe des Nächsten; Vom Tode; Die Ehre Gottes aus der Natur; Gottes Macht und Vorsehung; Busslied; An die Ferne geliebte, Op. 98 (Beethoven). Fischerweise, Op. 96, No. 4; Nacht und Träume, Op. 43, No. 2; Auf dem Wasser zu singen, Op. 72; Im Abendrot; Die junge Nonne, Op. 43, No. 1; Die Forelle, Op. 32 (Schubert).*

Elena Nikolaidi was born near Athens and made her professional debut with the State Orchestra of that city under Mitropoulos. While studying in Vienna she came to the attention of Bruno Walter who immediately engaged the young singer for a number of performances with the Vienna State Opera. She made her American debut at Town Hall (New York) in 1949 and received the acclaim of the critics. Her debut with the Metropolitan Opera as Amneris in *Aida* in 1951 was most successful and established Miss Nikolaidi as one of the great artists of the present era.

Music lovers will doubtless be interested in her record released this month. It contains some of

Beethoven and Schubert's loveliest songs. As you listen to them, we are sure that you will agree that Miss Nikolaidi is a lieder singer of high rank.

Sullivan: H. M. S. Pinafore. Twelve sides, and

Sullivan: Trial by Jury. Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company under the direction of Sir Rupert D'Oyly Carte. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-6008) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6008) \$11.44.

Sullivan: The Mikado. Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company under the direction of Sir Rupert D'Oyly Carte. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-6009) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LCT-6009) \$11.44. (TNR Dec. '36).

At long last RCA Victor has begun to re-issue the D'Oyly Carte versions of the merry Gilbert and Sullivan operettas; the carping between the camp of those who prefer the London *ffrr* versions and those who stick to the older ones will now cease.

When one considers that the original issues of H. M. S. *Pinafore* and *Trial by Jury* ante-dates THE NEW RECORDS, one must marvel at the job that RCA Victor has done in presenting this issue on modern LP records; the reproduction is definitely in the "good" category, albeit far below "hi-fi" standards. *The Mikado* was reviewed in our December 1936 issue, as indicated in the heading above.

PIANO



Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 533, with Rondo, K. 494.

One side, and **Mozart: Rondo in D, K. 485** and

Mozart: Adagio in B minor, K. 540 and

Mozart: Fantasy and Fugue in C, K. 394. Paul

Badura-Skoda, playing a piano from the Kunsthistorischen Museum (Vienna), built by Anton Walter (c. 1785). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5153) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sonata in F, K. 533, with Rondo, K. 494.

One side, and **Mozart: Rondo in D, K. 485** and

Mozart: Adagio in B minor, K. 540 and

Mozart: Fantasy and Fugue in C, K. 394. Paul

Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5154) \$5.95.

Here is an unusual pair of LP discs. On each of them the brilliant young pianist, Paul Badura-Skoda, has recorded the same Mozart selections. On the first disc Badura-Skoda used an instrument built circa 1785 by the celebrated Viennese instrument-maker, Anton Walter. Mozart is known to have been a great admirer of Walter's pianos, which were held in high esteem by Mozart's contemporaries even as late as Beethoven. The present instrument is housed in the Kunsthistorischen Museum in Vienna where these recordings were made. The recordings on the modern piano were also made in Austria but the make of the instrument used is not mentioned in the accompanying notes.

It is interesting to note that the progress that has been made in the making of pianos since Walter's day is not so great. If the present ancient instrument sounded as good in Mozart's time as it does now, that great composer was rewarded by hearing some very beautiful tones. It is no wonder that late 18th and early 19th century composers wrote so much music for the piano—they had really very acceptable instruments on which their music might be played.

Beethoven Sonata Society (Vol. I). Artur Schnabel (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1109) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1109) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Sonata No. 32 in C minor, Op. 111; Sonata No. 27 in E minor, Op. 90; Sonata No. 24 in F-sharp, Op. 78.

Beethoven Sonata Society (Vol. II). Artur Schnabel (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1110) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1110) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109; Sonata No. 13 in E-flat, Op. 27, No. 1; Sonata No. 9 in E, Op. 14, No. 1.

RCA Victor plans to make available the fifteen volumes of the famous Beethoven Sonata Society on LP discs—one LP disc for each volume. The first two volumes have been released recently, and the others are to follow at appropriate intervals. It is interesting to note that the 78 rpm versions of these first two volumes have been out-of-print for many years and have brought quite fancy prices as collectors' items. We understand that they will never be re-pressed at the original speed and thus those who possess "first editions" still have items of premium value; however, those who are only interested in having these sonatas played by the late Artur Schnabel may now secure them in either the 45 rpm version or on LP discs. As there are many music lovers throughout the world who feel that no one has ever recorded the Beethoven Piano Sonatas as has this distinguished German pianist, it would seem that RCA Victor's venture should meet with substantial success.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). Four sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109.** Two and one-half sides, and

Beethoven: Sonata No. 22 in F, Op. 54. Solomon (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1716) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1716) \$5.72.

Some time ago the great British pianist, Solomon, recorded Opus 13 and Opus 111, and this month three more Beethoven Sonatas played by him are made available. We learn that Solomon purposes to record all thirty-two of these works. There is no question but that Solomon is one of the greatest pianists of our day and many consider him a superb interpreter of Beethoven; but he will run into stiff competition in the Beethoven Sonata field from Kempff, Backhaus and Schnabel. All of the Sonatas are now available on LP discs by Kempff; Backhaus

has recorded most of them and the balance are to be released shortly; and it is rumored that the famous series that Schnabel made for HMV's so-called limited edition on 78's will presently be made available on LP's. This will give Beethoven lovers a wide choice, and we rather think that it is not likely that any of these great keyboard artists will receive an overwhelming majority; each will have the vote of a substantial group of admirers.

Schumann: Fantasiestücke, Op. 12. One side, and **Schumann: Fantasia in C, Op. 17.** Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5157) \$5.95.

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9 (TNR June '51). One side, and **Schumann: Papillons, Op. 2** (TNR Sept. '51). Guiomar Novaës (piano). 1-12" disc *VX-PL-7830) \$5.95.

There are numerous LP recordings of Schumann's *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12 and *Fantasia in C*, Op. 17 but we were greatly impressed with the present renditions by the young Austrian pianist, Joerg Demus. Here is a young artist that bears watching—his Schumann to us is something very special—his Schubert is also very fine—we don't think he is quite ready for Beethoven, but given time he will, in our opinion, rate with the best of them in all fields of keyboard music.

The two recordings on the Vox record have been previously released on LP discs with other couplings and were reviewed in the issues of TNR indicated in the heading above.

Tchaikovsky: "Album for the Young," Op. 39. Poldi Zeitlin (piano). 1-12" disc (*OPUS 6001) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Morning Prayer; Winter Morning; Hobby Horse; Mamma; The Wooden Soldiers' March; The Sick Doll; The Doll's Funeral; Waltz; The New Doll; Mazurka; Russian Song; Peasant Playing the Accordion; Kamarinskaya; Polka; Little Italian Song; Old French Song; Little German Song; Little Neapolitan Song; The Nurse's Tale; The Witch; Sweet Reverie; Song of the Lark; The Organ Grinder's Song; In the Church.

Beethoven: (21) Pieces for Piano. Poldi Zeitlin (piano). 1-12" disc (*OPUS 6002) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (6) German Dances; (6) Country Dances; (6) Minuets; Sonatina in G; (6) Variations on a Swiss Song; Sonatina in E-flat.

The two LP records listed above were designed primarily for young students of the piano. The recordings were made by Poldi Zeitlin, a niece and former pupil of the late Artur Schnabel. Miss Zeitlin is known for her great success as a teacher both abroad and in this country. She came to America in 1934 and since that time has been teaching in New York City. Miss Zeitlin has a national reputation and is a member of many educational societies in the field of music.

The first disc contains Tchaikovsky's "Album for the Young," Op. 39 consisting of twenty-four little pieces for piano. These date from 1877 and were composed while Tchaikovsky was on a vacation in Italy. They were written for the composer's nephew, Vladimir Davidow, a gifted young student of the piano. Since that time many young people all over the world have had the advantage of these delightful little pieces for their enjoyment and study. We don't recall their ever having been recorded before.

The second disc contains a number of Beethoven pieces, most of which are known to young students of the piano. Both discs contain much music that will be of great help to both teachers and pupils and thus we do not hesitate to recommend them. If they are well received, the publisher promises that more will be issued.

Dinu Lipatti Recital. Dinu Lipatti (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4633) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring; Siciliana (from "Sonata No. 2 in E-flat for Flute Solo"); Partita No. 1 in B-flat; Nun komm' der heiden heiland; Ich ruf' zu Dir, Herr Jesu Christ (Bach). Sonata No. 8 in A minor, K. 310 (Mozart).

There is an apparent insatiable demand for recordings by the late Dinu Lipatti, and thus it is only necessary to announce that a new disc containing such is available. Here is one, and it contains several very delightful selections which should be attractive to any discerning lover of piano music.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 30 in E, Op. 109.** Rudolf Serkin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4620) \$5.45.

Rudolf Serkin's host of admirers will doubtless be delighted to know that the present LP disc is now available. The performances of both of these sonatas are well up to Serkin's usual standard—need we say more?

ORGAN

A Richard Ellsasser Concert. Richard Ellsasser playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond, Jr., Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3005) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: 19th Psalm (Marcello); Gigue Ronde (J. C. F. Bach); Concerto in D minor—Adagio (Vivaldi-Bach); Rondo in G (Bull); Chorale-Prelude on "Rhosymedre" (Vaughan Williams); Carillon (Vierne); Fanfare (Thomson); Chollas Dance for You (Leach); Soul of the Lake (Karg-Elert); Marche Fantastique (Ellsasser).

In the November 1948 issue of TNR we reviewed an album of Bach music played by Richard Ellsasser (on 78 rpm discs) produced by a small independent company. We now have another, and far more satisfactory program played by this virtuoso artist.

It is more satisfactory because the material is good and unhackneyed and more suitable to Ellsasser's talents. His reputation as a Bach performer is indeed formidable, being the youngest person in history to have memorized and performed all the organ works of Bach and the first to give a complete performance from memory in America of Bach's "Liturgy." Nevertheless his interpretations of Bach on records are rather individual to say the least.

The pieces played on this disc include some shorter works from the standard organ repertoire and some novelties, but they are all good organ music, well written for the instrument. Ellsasser loses no opportunity to demonstrate the resources of the large instrument at his disposal, giving us many charming effects and many lovely solo stops. There is also the widest possible contrast in the material selected, from various schools and styles of composition. Any organist will find this an enjoyable disc, and laymen who just like organ music will hear some new things for the first time.

In much of the music here recorded Ellsasser has made use of the Dynamic Accentor which has recently been developed by the pipe organ division of the Hammond Research Laboratory of Gloucester, Mass. The Dynamic Accentor is an electronic device which, when added to an organ, can more than double its volume, enrich its tone, and greatly increase its power of expression, maintaining at the same time true pipe organ quality. Organists may wish to try to discover where the device is used on this disc. We were not aware of anything unusual taking place, which is some proof of its fidelity. S.

DICTION



Mr. President. Actual voices of the men who have made our history from 1933 to 1953, edited and narrated by James Fleming. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1753) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1753) \$5.72.

Here is another in the growing list of documentary recordings—it is a rather good one. James Fleming, one of the famous news editors of NBC has procured recordings of the voices of the great personalities and outstanding public figures of the last twenty years and tied them together with an interesting and lively commentary. An appropriate subtitle to "Mr. President" might be "Headlines from F.D.R. to D.E.E."

Merrill Moore Reading His Own Poetry. (Vols. I, II, and III). Merrill Moore (reading and commentary). 3-10" discs (*HARVARD PMM-1/3) \$4.95 each.

VOLUME I (*PMM-1): Introduction; *A Vaginal Ear; You Know What It Means To Be Thoroughly Satisfied?; Compulsive Scholar; He Told Me That; Now He Is Running a Greek Restaurant Somewhere;*

Mrs. Broderick; He Was a Different Fellow after a Couple of Drinks; No Comment; That Was Chicago; Anything for a Quick Buck; China Theatre, 1945; Scene from a Klangs Landscape; Squawky Bradfield; He Read Them Sermons That They Understood; On Oil; Sleeping by My Pad; In September Where Spiders Congregate.

VOLUME II (*PMM-2): Introduction; *The Sound of Time Hangs Heavy in My Ears; There Is a Way of Life; Men Are Strange; Nothing Can Be Too Damnable or Odd; The Most Difficult; Snow Melts and Leaves the Branches Glistening; It Is Written in the Elements Very Plain; No One Has Tried Harder; Elizabeth Fox, Single, Aged 54; Breakers.*

VOLUME III (*PMM-3): Introduction; *The Noise That Time Makes; The Book of How; Old Men and Old Women; Shot Who? Jim Lane?; Undergraduate; Why He Stroked the Cats; Warning to One; Sleepy Water; You Are the You That Poets Have Addressed; A Corner for Lefty; They Also Stand; The West Facade of the Parthenon Tells It All; Oh! Glimmering World; The Papers; Grandfather's Morning Is a Simple One; How Could I Know?*

Those of our readers who are interested in modern poetry will doubtless be pleased to know that Merrill Moore has recently recorded quite a number of his poems for the poetry Room, Harvard College Library. These LP recordings were made under the supervision of Professor F. C. Packard, Jr. and have been issued under the Harvard Vocarium label.

MISCELLANEOUS



French Horn Masterpieces. James Stagliano (horn) and Margo Stagliano (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1-12" disc (*BOSTON L-200) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonata for Horn and Piano, Op. 17 (Beethoven); Concerto Rondo for Horn and Piano, K. 370 (Mozart); Auf dem Strom, Op. 119 (horn, soprano and piano) (Schubert); Adagio and Allegro for Horn and Piano, Op. 70 (Schumann).*

The repertory of recorded chamber music is greatly enriched by the four selections to be found on this fine and unusual LP disc. All of them were written for the French horn—three are for that instrument with piano and the fourth adds a voice (either tenor or soprano). The last selection (Schubert's *Auf dem Strom, Op. 119*) was new to us and we were fascinated by it—we played it over three times, each time with greater enjoyment.

We must say a word for the fine artists who have made these thoroughly delightful recordings. James

Stagliano is the horn soloist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and also a member of the faculty of the Berkshire Music Center at Tanglewood. His wife, Margo, holds an Artist Diploma from the New England Conservatory of Music and has appeared with a number of orchestras including the Boston Symphony. Paul Ulanowsky is the well-known pianist and accompanist. He is also on the faculty of the Berkshire Music Center.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: Clavierübung (complete). Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichord) and Paul Callaway, playing the organ in Washington (D. C.) Cathedral. 7-12" discs in box (*HS-HSL-A) \$41.65. Also available singly.

*HS-HSL-3056: *Partita No. 1 in B-flat; Partita No. 5 in G.* Kirkpatrick. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3057: *Partita No. 2 in C minor; Partita No. 4 in D.* Kirkpatrick. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3058: *Partita No. 3 in A minor; Partita No. 6 in E minor.* Kirkpatrick. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3059: *Ouverture à la manière Française; (4) Duets; Italian Concerto in F.* Kirkpatrick. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3060: *Introduction; Kyrie; Gloria; Ten Commandments.* Callaway. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3061: *Credo; Lord's Prayer; Baptism; Penitence; Communion; Conclusion.* Callaway. \$5.95.

*HS-HSL-3062: *The Goldberg Variations.* Kirkpatrick. \$5.95.

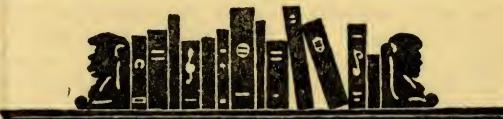
For the first time Bach's prodigious collection of keyboard works, one of the pinnacles in the musical art of Western civilization, has been recorded in its entirety. Ralph Kirkpatrick offers one of the finest examples of harpsichord playing we have heard. The intelligence and tastefulness of his performance should provide, even for the Bach lover whose auditory journey has been lengthy, the final step towards perfection.

Paul Callaway's execution of the Organ Mass contains an understanding of that work we have not found previously extended. Not even Helmut Wälcha's recording of it can match this one. Indeed, Wälcha's use of a baroque organ to achieve authenticity works in this instance to a disadvantage, for the more sombre tone of the modern organ seems more suited to the spirit of the Mass.

Program notes by Kirkpatrick are intelligent and extensive. Reproduction is excellent. C.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hodyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric, M—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* Indicates LP 33 1/2 rpm.
@ indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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FOR many years the art of recording was well ahead of the instruments that were made to play the records. In other words there was always more on the record than the phonograph would reproduce. Today things have changed, and many persons think that the new high fidelity instruments are capable of reproducing more than the present records contain. With this in mind Audiophile Records, Inc. has set about to produce records of an extremely wide frequency range with the lowest possible distortion. These records are intended primarily for those persons who are interested in high fidelity reproducing equipment. They might well be considered test records in which the fidelity of recording is of the greatest importance; the musical value is secondary.

Audiophile Records feels that the best possible recordings can be made at 78 rpm with the grooves made to be played with a micro-groove stylus. All Audiophile records should be played with a microgroove stylus regardless of whether they are made at 78 or 33 1/3 rpm. This should be borne in mind because if one of these records is played with a needle whose tip radius is greater than that of the micro-groove stylus, the record will be quickly ruined. All Audiophile records should be played with the same needle that you use for your LP (33 1/3 rpm) discs.

For those of our readers who are interested in high fidelity reproduction we are listing the presently available Audiophile records.

The following records have been recorded at 78 rpm:

Organ Music. Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-3) \$5.50.

CONTENTS: Carillon de Westminster (Vierne); Legende (Vierne); Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (Liszt).

Dixieland Jazz (Vol. I). Harry Blons and his Dixieland Band. 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-1) \$5.50.

CONTENTS: Pop Goes the Weasel; Wolverine Blues; Tia Juana; Lassus Trombone; Chimes Blues; Copenhagen.

The following records have been recorded at 33 1/3 rpm:

Organ Music. Robert Noehren (organ). 1-12" disc (*AUDIOPHILE AP-2) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Carillon de Westminster (Vierne); Scherzetto (Vierne); Divertissement (Vierne); (5) Short Choral Preludes (Reger); Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (Liszt).

Organ Music. Robert Noehren (organ). 2-12" discs in folder (*AUDIOPHILE AP-4/5) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: (3) Chorals (Franck); Prelude, Fugue and Variation (Franck).

If your local dealer does not stock Audiophile records, orders sent direct to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Our studio has been flooded with releases of overtures, waltzes and the like recently released by several manufacturers. Due to severe space limitations we cannot consider each issue separately; but because we feel that many of our readers would like to know of the release of these extremely popular items, we are listing them below.

Suppé: Poet and Peasant—Overture. One side, and **Suppé:** Pique Dame—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9006) \$2.95.

Strauss: Die Fledermaus—Overture. One side, and **Strauss: Der Zigeunerbaron**—Overture. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9008) \$2.95.

Rossini: L'Italiana in Algeri—Overture. One side, and **Rossini: Don Pasquale**—Overture. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alberto Errede. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9010) \$2.95.

Herold: Zampa—Overture. One side, and **Adam: Si J'Etais Roi**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9011) \$2.95.

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia—Overture. One side, and **Nicolai: The Merry Wives of Windsor**—Overture. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Victor Olof. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9012) \$2.95.

Beethoven: Prometheus Overture, Op. 43. One side, and **Beethoven: Fidelio**—Overture. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9024) \$2.95.

Weber: Oberon—Overture. One side, and **Weber: Euryanthe**—Overture. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9002) \$2.95.

Mozart: Magic Flute—Overture. One side, and **Mozart: Don Giovanni**—Overture. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9001) \$2.95.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3, Op. 42a. One side, and **Beethoven: Consecration of the House Overture, Op. 124.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9022) \$2.95.

R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier—Waltzes. One side, and **Humperdinck: Hansel und Gretel**—Dream Pantomime. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9025) \$2.95.

Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84. One side, and **Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op. 62.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9021) \$2.95.

Massenet: Phédre—Overture. One side, and **Saint Saëns: La Princesse Jaune**—Overture. L'Orchestre de l'Opéra Comique (Paris) conducted by Albert Wolff. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9020) \$2.95.

Strauss: Wine, Women and Song Waltz. One side, and **Strauss: Wiener Blut.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9013) \$2.95.

Nielsen: Helios Overture. One side, and **Schultz: Serenade for Strings.** Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erik Tuxen. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-653) \$4.95.

ORCHESTRA



Berlioz: Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale, Op. 15. Great Symphonic Brass Orchestra of Cologne, String Orchestra of Cologne, and Chorus of the Kölnischer Chor conducted by Fritz Straub. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-40) \$5.95.

Berlioz: Romeo and Juliet, Op. 17 (abridged). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4632) \$5.45.

Cecil Gray once wrote, very astutely, concerning the listener's reaction to the music of Berlioz, "either you receive at once, from the very first work of his that you hear, a thrill akin to an electric shock, or else you are completely insulated and rendered forever immune by a pachydermatous hide of indifference."

Originality, a quality Berlioz possessed to a greater degree than any other composer, is what Gray had in mind when he wrote the above; and originality is the keynote of the Fourth Symphony, the *Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale*. This astonishing score was written to honor the heroic dead of the Revolution of 1830. The work was first heard in July 1840 and is divided into three sections, a kind of drama in three acts. First is the funeral procession proper, then a more personal tribute in the form of a funeral oration which leads into the finale, an apotheosis, a song of triumph. It is thoroughly magnificent music from start to finish—the finest funeral music, incidentally, this reviewer has ever heard, bar none. The extraordinary blend of sublimity and tenderness, the titanic sweetness of the music is peculiar to Berlioz. The performance and recording are equally good, and much is added to the listener's enjoyment by Jacques Barzun's informative notes. A must for all Berliozians and worth investigation by all serious music lovers.

The second item, the *Roméo et Juliette Symphony*, is a profound disappointment. To begin with, Columbia's statement identifying the record as "the complete orchestral score" is deliberately misleading. What the disc amounts to is the usual three orchestral portions *Roméo's Reverie*, the *Love Music* (chorus omitted) and the *Queen Mab scherzo* plus two small orchestral fragments at the beginning and end. Of Dimitri Mitropoulos' direction, one can only brand it as insensitive. He uses a large orchestra in the scherzo, with the result that Queen Mab's tiny chariot does not seem to be drawn by gnats but by the brewer's big horses. By lending his name to such a travesty of this great score Mitropoulos adds nothing to his artistic stature—rather the opposite.

Columbia's recording is excellent—one could only wish their taste were equally good. For those who want Berlioz' *Roméo et Juliet* the only sound advice is to wait; music as fine as this will certainly receive an adequate performance and recording before too long.

W.

Tchaikovsky: The Swan Lake, Op. 20. Orchestra of the National Theatre (Prague) conducted by Jaroslav Krombholc. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-404) \$9.70.

Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty, Op. 66. L'Orchestra de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-636/7) \$11.90.

There are many versions of both these works on LP, but *The Sleeping Beauty* appears for the first time in a complete edition and *The Swan Lake* is here recorded completely for the second time. Fistoulari and the London Symphony recorded *The Swan Lake* complete (*L-LL-565/6) a short time ago. Which of the two complete *Swan Lakes* to get is no easy matter to decide. Fistoulari was one time chef d'orchestre of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and knows his way around ballet scores from first hand experience; furthermore he is an excellent conductor of the general repertoire. Jaroslav Krombholc is a new name to us. His reading of the *Swan Lake* in the present album is no ordinary achievement. There is an enthusiasm and an urgency in this performance that bring new life and excitement to the music. We had expected nothing like this from the National Theatre Orchestra of Prague under Krombholc, but here it is; and we must admit it was a wonderful listening experience! *Swan Lake* is supposed to be inferior to *Sleeping Beauty* as a musical score, but we enjoyed it more, possibly because of the marvelous performance. Urania's reproduction is splendid, and the orchestral crescendos are notably thrilling in their range of dynamics and clarity. This *Swan Lake* is so good that we think it is worth getting the complete version rather than a disc of the principal excerpts. The music you don't usually hear is as good as the popular excerpts, at least under Krombholc's hands.

The complete *Sleeping Beauty* does not appeal to us as much as the versions which give the highlights. The Stokowski set is a nearly complete version on one LP (*V-LM-1010) and his reading is an interesting one which we feel is quite satisfying for anyone who wants more *Sleeping Beauty* than occurs on the usual disc of excerpts. Our choice then is for Stokowski for *Sleeping Beauty* and Krombholc for *Swan Lake*, with plenty of other satisfactory discs for those who disagree. S.

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50012) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Der Bürger als Edelmann, Op. 60. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-684) \$5.95.

The classic interpretation of *Ein Heldenleben* has always been, and still remains, that by Mengelberg. His first recording with the New York Philharmonic is long since unavailable, but his recording, of a

later date, with the Amsterdam orchestra (*CL-P-8013) is one that seems to be the measuring stick for this work. Dedicated to Mengelberg, this overblown autobiography in music was so thoroughly believed in and understood by Mengelberg that his performance has the breadth and intensity that others cannot seem to match. Possibly he was as great an egotist as Strauss and the kindred spirits resulted in his great reading of the work. Whatever it was, Mengelberg has stated this music as few others can.

Antal Dorati and the Minneapolis orchestra offer a reading that is valid in every respect, well played, logical, and sincerely executed. What it may lack in rhetoric is made up in Mercury's reproduction, which is of today's best. The clarity of the full orchestral sound is as thrilling in its transparency as it is in sheer volume. This disc is easily the best *Ein Heldenleben* in sound, and with its excellent performance and good solo work, it is recommended to those who wish the work, with the exception of those who want a legendary interpretation even if less desirable reproduction—then it is Mengelberg. All other recordings including that by Strauss himself, fit somewhere between these two in the matters of reproduction and interpretation.

Der Burger als Edelmann is more familiarly known as *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* or "The Would-Be Gentleman." It is available on LP conducted by Fritz Reiner and also by Strauss himself. Clemens Krauss and the Vienna Philharmonic provide a beautiful account of the music and also enjoy by far the best reproduction. The nine sections of this work, while contrasted, are for the most part much more tame than most of Strauss' work, and this music has seemed as something peculiar and out of the way for Strauss fans. It is actually quite charming and probably better than some of Strauss' things which produce goose-flesh.

S.

Goeb: Symphony No. 3. Leopold Stokowski and His Symphony Orchestra. One side, and **Bartòk: Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion.** Gerson Yessin and Raymond Viola (pianos) and Elayne Jones and Alfred Howard (percussion). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1727) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1727) \$5.72.

For those willing to explore new paths in music, this disc will provide the finest material. Both of the works here recorded are, according to Mr. Stokowski, something new in music. Bartòk, in particular, has achieved a new music in his work. Bartòk absorbs all earlier conceptions of sonata form, and develops them boldly in several new directions with his own personal creative vitality. He combines the percussive possibilities of the piano with the precise rhythmic dynamics of the timpani and xylophone in a perfect blending unparalleled in all music so far. There are many fine shadings in the percussion writing and Stokowski and his players explore them perfectly in the performance. The program notes for both works

on this disc appear over Stokowski's signature, so we assume he wrote them—they sound like him. These program notes are among the best it has been our pleasure to read in many a reviewing session, and we wish Stokey would write all of RCA's notes, as well as a few other companies'. You will find them informative and indeed helpful when studying the music recorded. We have borrowed freely from them in descriptive matter in this short review.

Stokowski claims Goeb's music is one of the many expressions today of the independence of American Culture in general. Today the most talented American composers are expressing through Tone and Rhythm our conception of the life of action and feeling of America. Goeb is one of the most outstanding of these. He says further that, frankly, this highly developed and deeply original symphony will not be understood by one hearing. A detailed intellectual analysis of its themes and structure might confuse the listener. Only repeated listening, with an open mind and heart, will reveal its musical message with clear forms and eloquent expression of its depth of feeling.

We think this record is of exceptional merit and recommend it highly to anyone interested in something new and worth while in modern music. Stokowski has no peers in presenting music of this sort, and his results here are obviously wonderful. The reproduction is superb, with the difficult percussion captured excellently. S.

Mozart: Serenade No. 10 in B-flat, K. 361. Los Angeles Woodwinds conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8181) \$4.98.

Mozart: Symphony No. 26 in E-flat, K. 184. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 32 in G, K. 318.** Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4045) \$2.50.

These two Mozart discs are welcome on several counts. The *Serenade No. 10 in B Flat* is a real major work; and this is the first really satisfactory performance and recording of it, although three are now available. Koussevitzky's effort for Victor (TNR June '49) misses fire completely due to his inability to grasp the Mozart style while Vox's performance (TNR Mar. '50) was dull and poorly played. It was so poor that this reviewer was inclined to think the fault Mozart's (he should have known better!).

The *Serenade* dates from 1781 and is a true masterpiece from beginning to end. The enjoyment of the sheer sound that emanates from the wind group is one of the most fascinating musical experiences. How Mozart explores the combinations and colorings of the instruments is indescribable. A quartet of clarinets and bassoon, a sextet of oboes, bassoon and bassoons over the supporting double bass—such are a few of the combinations and the melodies are among the most ravishing Mozart ever wrote.

Mr. Steinberg and his musicians play the work

superbly and to the hilt. All the repeats, one is glad to note, are observed, thus preserving the formal structure of the piece. One digression has been made—a contra-bassoon is used in addition to the conventional double bass Mozart called for. There seems to be some confusion as to which instrument should be used, but Mr. Steinberg's inclusion of both is a happy one as is evidenced by this performance. Capitol's recording is virtually perfect.

The little Decca record, with its modest price, is also a decidedly worthwhile release. The first recording of the *Symphony No. 26 in E Flat* is cause for rejoicing and the present waxing of the *Symphony No. 32 in G* is superior technically to the older Capitol-Telefunken disc. Neither of these works can be called a "Symphony" in the present sense of the word; rather they are overtures (Italian—fast-slow-fast). Indeed, the *Symphony No. 32* is strongly suspected of being the overture to the incomplete *Zaide* (TNR Jan. '53). Both are well played, finely recorded and decidedly worth owning. W.

Dvořák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 46 (complete). Two sides, and **Dvořák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 72 (complete).** Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Václav Talich. 2-12" discs (*UR-URLP-604) \$11.90.

Dvořák: Slavonic Dances, Op. 46 (complete). Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Václav Talich. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7076) \$5.95.

The set that Talich and the Czech Orchestra made for Victor some years ago of these Slavonic Dances has been the criterion, and we are fortunate that the same forces now have this music in modern reproduction. And for once, the new recording is even better in performance than the former one. So often the remake lacks the sparkle and inspiration of the original effort; but this time there is more finish and polish to both the interpretation and the performance. Talich is clearly the greatest interpreter this wonderful music has ever had, and his present album is beyond comparison with anything else on discs. It is also complete, for both Op. 46 and Op. 72 are presented in their entirety. The quality of the reproduction is something of a surprise, for it is equal to the best work of our "free" countries, and mirrors the performances faithfully. Urania is to be congratulated in every respect for this set.

What there is about Talich's way with the Dvořák *Slavonic Dances* that distinguishes it from other conductors' readings is hard to describe. He is full of dash and enthusiasm in the lively dances and equally as effective in the slower ones with a serene and reflective manner. Talich must have a thorough understanding of the music, its idiom, its meaning, and a genuine love for it all. He does not negate any of this with virtuoso tricks of conducting; everything sounds perfectly natural and easy. You just have to hear this set to appreciate its quality. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("Great"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert Von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4631) \$5.45.

Just last month we reviewed the Schubert Ninth as recorded by Furtwängler and the Berlin Philharmonic (*D-DX-119) and found it outstanding. Von Karajan presents a reading of the work which is vastly different, to our ears, from Furtwängler. In Von Karajan's hands the work is scaled down, is more closely knit, moves along in an orderly and business-like fashion, and hardly earns the title of "Great." It is not necessarily a hurried performance, but it seems to lack strength and conviction. It certainly has not the muscular energy and fire of the Toscanini reading, for those who like a galloping, straightforward performance. And it has not the intensity and cumulative power of the Walter reading. Needless to say, it lacks the lofty air of the Furtwängler reading. We feel that Von Karajan's reading it not bad; it is just not exceptional, nor of a calibre which this music deserves. In this case, good is not good enough.

Whoever was conducting the Vienna Philharmonic in whatever interpretation of the Schubert Ninth would result in some beautiful playing by this renowned group, and you will hear moments of magnificent orchestral eloquence by an orchestra steeped in Schubertian tradition. The reproduction is of the bright, clear, and lively variety, very telling, and bordering on thinness once in a while. Again a great contrast to the admired Furtwängler recording, where the reproduction is big, bloomy, and rich, bordering on thickness. Well, whatever the prospective purchaser's taste may be, he will find something in a Schubert Ninth to enjoy, for about every kind of performance and reproduction are now on LP. Just be sure to ask for the Schubert "Great" C major symphony, for some of the companies, including Columbia, still label it the "Seventh." S.

Kodály: Háry János—Suite. One side, and **Bartók: Divertimento for String Orchestra.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1750) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1750) \$5.72.

The pairing on this disc is good, with two compositions by Hungarian composers, but of a nicely contrasting style. The Bartók *Divertimento* is much more lighthearted and gay than most of his works, and is quite easy to listen to the first time, even for those not attuned to contemporary musical styles. It was composed in the short period of two weeks during the summer of 1939 and is the second of two works which Bartók composed for string orchestra alone (the first preceded it by many years). It is in three movements. Dorati offers a splendid reading in a recording more pleasant sounding than the other LP version by Tibor Serly (*BARTOK BRS-905).

Kodály's *Háry János Suite*, a great favorite of

ours, received a warm and enthusiastic review here when it was issued by Ormandy and the Philadelphians (*C-ML-4306) (TNR Aug. '50). A comparison of the two discs shows Ormandy has not been nudged out of first place by this newer issue of Dorati. The reproduction of the Ormandy disc is fuller and bolder with a richer texture, if a tiny bit less clarity at times. The performance has a finer finish and often more dash and vigor under Ormandy's hands. Dorati's reading is indeed good, and the performance and reproduction are also good; but Ormandy's is better, as one can hear by playing both discs. We have heard better playing by the Minneapolis Orchestra under Dorati in later recordings on the Mercury label.

If the *Háry János Suite* is what you seek, get Ormandy. If you prefer the Dorati coupling, it is a highly acceptable second choice. S.

Ellington Uptown. Duke Ellington and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4639) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Skin Deep; The Mooche; Take the "A" Train; A Tone Parallel to Harlem; Perdido.*

In the study of the art form of Hot Jazz the phonograph record is the thing, for in jazz the selection being played is but a means to an end; the artists, the arrangement, the spirit at the actual recording session—these are what are studied. A new recording of Louis Armstrong's *Potato Head Blues*, even by Louis himself, would be impossible, any more than it would be possible to have a second Battle of Midway; the situation at a new recording session would be different—perhaps better, perhaps worse—but different all the same.

And this is indeed unfortunate. There has been considerable clamoring among jazz enthusiasts for the issuance of good jazz on wide range records; they feel they are entitled to "hi-fi" jazz just as classical music lovers are entitled to good reproduction on their discs. However, because much good jazz was recorded in the late twenties and early thirties, such recordings must remain in the category "reproduction—fair."

It therefore gives us pleasure to be able to announce that Columbia has issued this month a recording of the immortal Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, the reproduction of which is second to none. The band, including the soloists, was "up" for this fortuitous session. Jazz lovers will want this disc; it may well bode better things to come in the reproduction of *Le Jazz Hot*. J.

Delius: Eventyr ("Once Upon a Time"). One side, and **Delius: North Country Sketches.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4637) \$5.45.

Whenever we see the names of Delius and Beecham together as we do on this disc we are very sure that we are going to listen to some unusual and thoroughly delightful music. We were not disappointed when we listened to the present LP record.

... *Eventyr* was inspired by a collection of Norwegian folk stories that came to Delius' attention. Just as the stories are full of fantastic spirits, giants, kelpies and hobgoblins, so is Delius' music filled with musical suggestions of these legendary creatures. We found it fascinating. . . . *North Country Sketches* was inspired by the countryside of Yorkshire, and the four sections are entitled: Autumn, the wind soughs in the trees; Winter Landscape; Dance; The March of Spring. . . . If you know Delius, you will certainly wish to hear this record; if you don't, here is a good opportunity to make the acquaintance of an unique figure in the world of music.

New Year Concert 1953. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-683) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Dorfenschwalben aus Österreich; Moulinet; Ohne Sorgen; Feuerfest* (Josef Strauss). *Stadt und Land; Auf der Jagd; Morgenblätter; Ritter Pasman; Perpetuum Mobile* (Johann Strauss).

"Each year Vienna, the city for which the Strauss family composed their greatest pieces, presents a program dedicated to their honor. The material is selected by popular request and played on the first day of January by the world-famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Clemens Krauss. London has previously been privileged to bring you the contents of these programs through recordings made prior to the actual concert. The success of the first recording (*L-LL-484) has encouraged us to embark upon these annual events as a part of our regular recording schedule. This present collection is the second in the projected series."

The above paragraph is quoted from London's announcement of the present LP disc and, we feel, fully describes it. All that we believe it is necessary to add is that the reproduction is *ffrr* at its best.

Goldmark: Symphony, Op. 26 ("Rustic Wedding"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4626) \$5.45.

Rather than a symphony, this is a suite of musical tableaux that are illustrative of the program suggested by the title of each movement. These movements are marked, Wedding March, Bride's Song, Serenade, In the Garden, and The Dance. It is picturesque and full of captivating melodies, prevailingly gay and sentimental, and is a romantic masterpiece of its kind. While not as frequently heard today on concert programs as it was around the turn of the century, it is worthy of a good performance now and then. It has had several recordings, all of them good; but none of them exceed the present one.

The only other version available on LP is by Swoboda and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra (*CH-CHS-1138), and while it is a good job, Beecham easily runs away with the honors. Sir

Thomas handles this score with the delicate perception which marks his best work. The gracefulness with which he turns the phrases is indeed a joy. His sense of balance and his innate good taste bring a freshness to his reading of this lovely music that we doubt could be bettered. The Royal Philharmonic performs superbly, and their tone and the way it is reproduced add to the over-all effectiveness of this disc. We would give this record our highest endorsement from every standpoint. S.

Beethoven: (12) Contretänze. One side, and

Beethoven: (11) Wiener Tänze. Vienna State Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-429) \$5.95.

Grieg: (4) Norwegian Dances, Op. 35. One side, and **Sibelius: Rakastava Suite, Op. 14** and **Sibelius: Valse Triste, Op. 44.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-430) \$5.95.

Strauss: Pizzicato Polka. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. And **Strauss: If You Please** and **Strauss: Leichtes Blut, Schnell-polka, Op. 319** ("High Spirits"). Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and **Strauss: Annen Polka, Op. 117** and **Strauss: Tritsch-Tratsch, Op. 214.** RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4043) \$2.50.

Sibelius: Finlandia, Op. 26, No. 2 and **Sibelius: Festivo, Op. 25, No. 3.** One side, and **Sibelius: Swan of Tuonela, Op. 22, No. 3** and **Sibelius: Valse Triste, Op. 44.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-166) \$3.

We have grouped these LP discs together because they all contain music that is tuneful and easy to enjoy. For the most part it is music that one is likely to encounter at summer concerts of fine orchestras. These selections are intended for the pleasure of the listeners, and so we suggest that you relax and enjoy them. They have been beautifully played and splendidly recorded.

Slaughter on 10th Avenue and other Ballet Selections. Boston Pops Orchestra conducted by Arthur Fiedler. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1726) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1726) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (Rodgers); *Rodeo*—Waltz & Saturday Night Hoedown (Copland); *Fancy Free*—3 dances (Bernstein); *Interplay*—Gavotte & The Blues (Gould); *Three-Cornered Hat*—Suite (Falla); *Age of Gold*—Polka (Shostakovich); *Gayne*—Sabre Dance (Khatchaturian); *Sebastian*—Barcarolle (Menotti); *Petrouchka*—Dance of the Ballerina & Danse Russe (Stravinsky).

Arthur Fiedler has chosen a number of well-known ballet selections for this unique and fascinating disc.

They are played with fine spirit, and RCA Victor has supplied the best of modern reproduction. This is certainly a brilliant and stimulating record.

Chopin—trans. Britten: *Les Sylphides*. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8194) \$3.98. Coupled with **Tchaikovsky**: *Princess Aurora*. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8193) \$4.98.

Tchaikovsky: *Princess Aurora*. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8195) \$3.98. Coupled with **Chopin**: *Les Sylphides*. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8193) \$4.98.

Bernstein: *Fancy Free*. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8197) \$3.98. Coupled with **Copland**: *Rodeo*. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8196) \$4.98.

Copland: *Rodeo*. Ballet Theatre Orchestra conducted by Joseph Levine. 1-10" disc (*CL-L-8198) \$3.98. Coupled with **Bernstein**: *Fancy Free*. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8196) \$4.98.

We are sure that ballet fans will be delighted to know that Capitol has secured the services of the orchestra of Ballet Theatre and its brilliant conductor, Joseph Levine, for these recordings. Thus we are assured of performances that are in the authentic spirit of the various ballets. As Capitol has supplied the best of reproduction, we can recommend these recordings without reservation.

Each ballet is available separately on a 10-inch LP disc or the four may be had on two 12-inch discs (see listings above).

Grieg: *Symphonic Dances*, Op. 64. One side, and

Grieg: *Norwegian Dances*, Op. 35. Danish National Orchestra of the State Radio conducted by Eric Tuxen. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10132) \$4.85.

Grieg: *Peer Gynt Suite No. 2*, Op. 55 and **Grieg**:

Norwegian Dances, Op. 35. One side, and

German: *Henry VIII Dances* and **German**:

Welsh Rhapsody. City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3041) \$3.08.

Two moderately priced LP discs containing some tuneful music that most anyone may enjoy—nicely recorded by two orchestras from abroad which are known to Americans through their recordings.

Elgar: *Enigma Variations*, Op. 36. Four sides, and

Brahms: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn*, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Chorale"). NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1725) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1725) \$5.72.

Here is a Toscanini record that we can recommend without reservation. We are sure that most music lovers will agree with us that the present disc contains the best recorded versions of these well-beloved selections.

CONCERTO



Brahms: *Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 83*. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1728) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1728) \$5.72.

Brahms: *Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 83*. Monique de la Bruchollerie (piano) with the Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7950) \$5.95.

The Brahms *Second Concerto* was reviewed in the January TNR in a new version by Backhaus with the Vienna Philharmonic under Schuricht (*L-LL-628). This recording we found to be the best of the available LP's. That makes things difficult with respect to the present set by Rubinstein and Münch, for it is a wonderful performance. When Rubinstein appeared for the first time with the Boston Symphony at Tanglewood last August, he scored highly when he performed this work. It was considered a memorable interpretation, with authority and grand musicianship. RCA Victor lost no time in getting a recording by the same forces, which incidentally, presents the Boston orchestra in one of its rare roles as accompanist.

We will not bother to repeat or amplify our remarks in the January review concerning this concerto, except to state that it is one of the very great works in this form—to many the finest among all piano concertos. It is no easy matter to turn out a fine performance of the work. The orchestra plays a large part in the score, with the piano often submerged in the fabric as an orchestral instrument. The problem of balance in a recording of the work is important considering the nature of the score.

Of the two versions, Backhaus and Rubinstein, we cannot state an honest preference for one above the other. They are not so similar, but they are both beautiful readings. Backhaus is somewhat more direct and solid; Rubinstein is more mellow and resilient. Both are done in the grand manner with a broad, healthy, large-scale approach. And both enjoy excellent reproduction with good piano tone and admirable balance. So far we have not mentioned the Vox disc by Monique de la Bruchollerie. She is a gifted pianist, and her performance of the Brahms *Second* is a fine one. It does not, however, equal Rubinstein or Backhaus, nor does the accompaniment match the others. The reproduction is only a shade under Victor's and London's. One thing we did not like in the Vox disc is the business near the end of the first movement where piano, orchestra, and reproduction get out of hand and work against one another to the point where there is some odd-sounding hash. We recommend either Rubinstein or Backhaus as superb examples of how this concerto should sound.

S.

Stravinsky: Piano Concerto (1923/4). Soulima Stravinsky (piano) with the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. Four sides, and **Stravinsky: Scherzo à la Russe**. RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra conducted by Igor Stravinsky. One side, and **Stravinsky: (2) Russian Church Choruses** ("Pater noster;" "Ave Maria"). Chorus of Men and Boys conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7010) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7010) \$4.67.

A recent LP recording of the Stravinsky Concerto by Mewton-Wood (*CH-CHS-1160) is easily superceded by the present disc, if for nothing more than the unquestioned authenticity of this recording. Stravinsky is an excellent conductor and interpreter of his own works, and in a composition of this nature his version is unquestioned. This concerto was the medium through which he made his bow to the general public as a concert pianist, between 1924 and 1933. After performing it himself more than forty times, Stravinsky used it to introduce his son, Sviatoslav, to the Parisian public, and now it introduces the team of Igor and Soulima Stravinsky on phonograph records. The end movements are biting, closely packed, jittery, and percussive, and typical of much of Stravinsky's writing. If you like Stravinsky, this will appeal you; if you prefer the Grieg and Schumann concertos in style, stay away from this disc. The reproduction is excellent.

The *Scherzo à la Russe* is one of a number of short, light pieces which Stravinsky composed for various American organizations when he first came to settle in this country. It was written in 1944 for Paul Whiteman's radio orchestra and was later rescored for full symphonic ensemble. It is clever and enjoyable.

The two *Russian Church Choruses* are among Stravinsky's rare contributions to the literature of the unaccompanied choir. Both were originally composed to texts in Old Slavonic for use in the liturgy of the Russian Church, the *Pater Noster* in 1926 and the *Ave Maria* in 1934. In 1949 both were re-written and adapted to the Latin texts used here. They will come as a pleasant surprise to most folks, for they are effective, appropriate settings. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Dvořák: Serenade in D minor, Op. 44. London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7533) \$3.85.

Karl Haas and his London Baroque Ensemble, which has gained fame pretty much throughout the world via BBC broadcasts, is now becoming known to discerning music lovers in the United States by means of Decca records. The present Dvořák Serenade is quite enticing as played by this unique group of seasoned and accomplished players.

Mozart: Quartet No. 1 in G minor, K. 478. One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 16**. New York Quartet: Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano), Milton Katims (viola), Alexander Schneider (violin), Frank Miller (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4627) \$5.45.

Mozart: Quartet No. 19 in C, K. 465. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet in D minor, K. 421**. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5175) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet No. 1 in G minor, K. 478. One side, and **Mozart: Quartet No. 2 in E-flat, K. 493**. Clifford Curzon (piano) with members of the Amadeus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-679) \$5.95.

Mozart: Divertimento No. 10 in F, K. 247. Members of the Vienna Octet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-682) \$4.95.

Mozart: Divertimento in E-flat, K. 563. Bel Arte Trio: Ruth Posselt (violin); Joseph DePasquale (viola); Samuel Mayes (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9659) \$5.85.

All of this Mozart chamber music is already available on LP records, thus we are simply listing these discs so that our readers will know that they have been released.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69**. Janos Starker (violoncello) and Abba Bogin (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-560) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F, Op. 5, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1** and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2**. Janos Starker (violoncello) and Abba Bogin (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-561) \$5.95.

Beethoven: (5) Sonatas for Violoncello and Piano. Janos Starker (violoncello) and Abba Bogin (piano). 2-12" discs in box (*PE-SPL-562) \$12.55.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in F, Op. 5, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2**. Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Carlo Zecchi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5170) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69. One side, and **Beethoven: Variations on Mozart's "Bie Mannern Welche Liebe Fuhlen" in E-flat**. Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Carlo Zecchi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5173) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2**. Antonio Janigro (violoncello) and Carlo Zecchi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5180) \$5.95.

Here we have Beethoven's Sonatas for Violon-

cello and Piano played by the Hungarian violoncellist, Janos Starker and the Italian player, Antonio Janigro. Each is joined by a very able pianist. We have listened to each set very carefully and we cannot choose between them. The excellence of both is so marked that any choice that we might make would not be valid.

Brahms: Quartet No. 2 in A. Clifford Curzon (piano) with members of the Budapest String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4630) \$5.45.

Brahms: Quartet No. 2 in A minor, Op. 51, No. 2. One side, and **Brahms: Quartet No. 3 in B-flat, Op. 67.** Curtis String Quartet. 1-12" disc (WEST-WL-5152) \$5.95.

Brahms: Trio in E-flat, Op. 40. Walter Barylli (violin), Franz Koch (horn), Franz Holletschek (piano). One side, and **Brahms: Trio in A minor, Op. 114.** Franz Kwarda (violoncello), Leopold Wlach (clarinet), Franz Holletschek (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5146) \$5.95.

As all of this Brahms chamber music is already available on LP records, we will limit ourselves to just a listing of these discs with the exception that we will call attention to the very excellent recording of the *Quartet No. 2 in A* by Clifford Curzon (piano) and members of the Budapest String Quartet. We surely feel that this recording deserves especial mention.

Bartók: Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion. Gerson Yessin and Raymond Viola (pianos) and Elayne Jones and Alfred Howard (percussion). One side, and **Goeb: Symphony No. 3.** Leopold Stokowski and His Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1727) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1727) \$5.72.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

OPERA

Verdi: Un Ballo in Maschera (complete). (Sung in Italian). Maria Caniglia (soprano); Beniamino Gigli (tenor); Fedora Barbieri (contralto); Gino Bechi (baritone); Chorus and Orchestra of the Opera House (Rome) conducted by Tullio Serafin. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-6007) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6007) \$11.44.

(This annotation is reprinted from the November 1947 issue. It appeared in this place when the imported recording of this work was reviewed.)

A new, imported, complete *Un Ballo in Maschera* is a notable addition to the growing list of recorded operas. The new *Ballo* is a valuable addition, for Verdi's fine old opera, so typical of his middle period as well as being a treasure chest of lovely Verdian melodies, deserved the honor of perpetuation in its entirety (only one or two short traditional cuts are made) on wax.



Tullio Serafin, remembered for his many distinguished performances at the Metropolitan, is the authoritative and dynamic conductor. With the orchestra of Rome's Royal Opera House at his disposal, his fervor is such that it tends sometimes to cover the singers.

The singers are important artists. Beniamino Gigli is the Riccardo. He gives an unusually lyric performance of a role that can stand more impassioned and dramatic treatment. The famous tenor with the loveliest voice since Caruso is beginning to show his age in this set. He sings with great care, often sparingly. The old reckless abandon to the tumult of the moment, the ringing prolonged climaxes are no longer present. Mr. Gigli moves with obvious caution in the superb and very taxing love-duet of the second act. Nevertheless, he manages to arrive without mishap on the final high C with Mme. Caniglia, who overwhelms him throughout. The tenor's laughing phrases in the famous Quintet are overdone. One has only to listen to Caruso and Bonci's records of this passage to realize that Mr. Gigli's mirthless cackles are not altogether successful. Granting a loss of brilliance and sustaining power—the inevitable toll of time—Gigli is nevertheless Gigli, a tenor of whom we have always expected so much that he makes us super-critical. The tenor's singing is still smooth, cleanly phrased and many times of lovely quality.

Maria Caniglia, the opera's unfortunate heroine, Amelia, falls somewhat short of the great standard she set for herself in the *Forza del Destino* albums. Her singing here is notable for its dramatic impact and vitality. Her best moment is a superbly sung *Morro, ma prima in grazia*, in which she sustains her reputation as Italy's finest dramatic soprano of the day.

Gino Bechi, the Renato, gets off to a slow start. His opening aria, *Alla vita che t'arride*, finds him not at ease. During the first two acts his unsteady tones have trouble piercing maestro Serafin's highly-gearred orchestra. However, in the third act he comes into his own with a nobly sung *Eri tu?* At its best, it is a commanding voice.

There is a full-toned *Ulrica* in Fedora Barbieri, and the music of the joyous little page, Oscar, is fluently and brightly sung by Elda Ribetti. Tancredi Pasero and Ugo Novelli are properly ponderous as those wicked conspirators with the Rover Boys names—Sam and Tom.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

Rossini: Il Barbiere di Siviglia (complete). (Sung in Italian). Victoria de los Angeles (mezzo-soprano), Nicola Monti (tenor), Gino Bechi (baritone), Nicola Rossi-Lemeni (basso), Milan Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Tullio Serafin. 3-12" discs in "album" (*V-LM-6104) \$17.16.

Rossini's fortunately indestructable *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* appears this month in its second complete

LP recording and barely survives the callous treatment it receives. One has doubts as early as the overture wherein Maestro Serafin tips his hand, so to speak, for the sparkling prelude is given a "reading," complete with *accelerandi*, exaggerated *crescendi* and over-all general fussiness. One's fears are allayed slightly by the beautiful aubade *Ecco ridente in cielo* but shortly after this delightful bit, Figaro, in the person and voice of Gino Bechi comes bouncing in and all attempts at a musical performance fly out the window. From here on it becomes a musical rat race with everyone, with the exception of Miss de los Angeles (who is obviously too much of a lady for such shenanigans) hooting and hollering and acting like a group of rank amateurs.

Bechi is easily the worst offender. He always is singing at top voice, is generally coarse in tonal quality and, to be frank, becomes common and obnoxious. Sgr. Monti as Almaviva sings well, but after his first aria he is overwhelmed and is virtually forced to shout in order to be heard. Rossi-Lemeni's performance reminds one of the immortal Al Lopez' remark describing a young ball player as "good field—no hit." As Basilio, Rossi-Lemeni is "good sing—no act." Dr. Bartolo's music is gone over by Melchiore Luise in routine fashion, and it does not come off. This is surprising in view of his excellent Don Pasquale of a few months back. Victoria de los Angeles sings like her name but seems a somewhat vocally mature Rosina. It is always a pleasure to hear her, however, and perhaps one can ascribe her semi-failure to Serafin's unfeeling direction.

Robert Lawrence, writing in the notes for the set, states (in a different connection, however) that "not many opera singers have a flair for real humor. The grimness of their usual assignments is such that on *buffa* nights they incline more to a naive romp than to any working discipline." Surely a conductor celebrating his fiftieth anniversary should be able to control his singers better—or perhaps he didn't care? In all events the best *Barbiere* is the Cetra recording (TNR May '51).

W.

Wagner: Die Walküre—Act I (complete). (Sung in German). Maria Müller (soprano), Wolfgang Windgassen (tenor), Josef Greindl (bass), Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. Three sides, and **Wagner: Götterdämmerung**—Act II, Scene 3. (Sung in German). Josef Greindl (bass) with Chorus of the Bavarian State Opera and the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiger. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-121) \$11.70.

Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is astonishingly poorly represented on records for all its popularity. And now, with the first act of *Die Walküre* being issued by Decca, there are two versions of this music but still only scattered excerpts from the other operas in the group—none at all from *Das Rheingold*. It is a confusing state of affairs and one that

is difficult to understand.

The present recording is a fine one. Maria Müller is a famous Sieglinde and her work will be familiar to those attending Metropolitan performances in the Twenties and early Thirties. Time has dealt kindly with Mme. Müller; aside from a sense of strain on high notes, her voice is still youthful and engaging. As Sigmund, Wolfgang Windgassen adds to the laurels he gained in the complete *Parsifal* (TNR Apr. '52). This young man is someone to watch, for he has a command of style and expression that should raise him to the top. His high notes are ringing and clear, and he has a lower register that many tenors would give a lot to possess. The brief portion for Hunding is sung in sterling fashion by Josef Greindl. Ferdinand Leitner's direction is at all times in good taste—sonorous, exciting and never lacking in the necessary drive.

The odd side is devoted to that portion of *Die Götterdämmerung* which deals with Hagen's preparations for Gunther's return. It is one of the few passages in *Der Ring* that makes use of the chorus. It is ably sung and well directed.

The only previous recording on LP of the *Walküre* music is the early Victor set with Lehmann, Melchior and List. It is a dubbing from 78's and lacks the brilliance and drive of the present set although it will undoubtedly have its adherents.

The recording here is excellent throughout, the only omission is that of a libretto. There are, however, copious notes that make partial amends. W.

Donizetti: Don Pasquale (complete). (Sung in Italian). Alda Noni (soprano); Cesare Valletti, Armando Benzi (tenors); Mario Borriello (baritone); Sesto Bruscantini (basso); Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana conducted by Mario Rossi. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1242) \$11.90.

Apparently to complete the cycle of three, Cetra has issued a recording of Donizetti's ever-green *Don Pasquale*. The two previous recordings, one by Westminster, the other from Urania, both had some features that were excellent (TNR Feb. '53) but Cetra, who incidentally has a remarkable list of recorded successes, again presents a performance that is on a uniformly high level and superior to both its predecessors.

Undoubtedly much of the credit for this success belongs to Mario Rossi. There is something almost uncanny in the manner in which he is able to breathe life into a score and inspire his singers to perform with style and intelligence. And he has some top-flight artists for this recording. Sesto Bruscantini manages to top both Corena (no mean job, incidentally) of the Urania set and Luise of the Westminster. He does this, not so much by vocal endowment (Corena shades him in this respect) as by imagination and expressiveness. Bruscantini's *Don Pasquale* is human, a half crusty, half humorous old man who

is completely believable. How much is the singer's work and how much is Rossi's direction is hard to determine, but it is a splendid example of team work. Alda Noni is vocally the best of the recorded Norinas. She also manages to be real—capricious, scheming and loving in turn—it is a fine portrayal. Valetti, as *povero* Ernesto, is properly woebegone and lovesick (a difficult condition) and sings with a clear lyric tenor that is at once musical and convincing. Dr. Malatesta, in the person of Mario Borriello, is a veritable tower of strength.

The charm of this *Don Pasquale* lies in its complete naturalness. The asides, the laughter and other dramatic, rather than musical effects, are handled in superb fashion. This was undoubtedly achieved by means of adequate rehearsal, a state of affairs so often lacking in present day operatic performances. Thus Cetra adds another prize to its already long series of successfully recorded Italian operas. The extras, in the form of notes and libretto, are models of good taste and readability. W.

Puccini: La Bohème (complete). (Sung in Italian).

Rosanno Carteri, Elvira Ramella (sopranos); Ferruccio Tagliavini, Armando Benzi (tenors); Giuseppe Taddei, Pier Luigi Latinucci (baritones); Cesare Siepi, Piero Poldi, Mario Zorgnani (bassos); Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana conducted by Gabriele Santini. 2-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1237) \$11.90.

Cetra's entry in the *Bohème* sweepstakes (there have been five other entries) is a thoroughbred and, to continue the analogy, runs a dead heat with London's superb performance and recording.

A first-rate cast has been gathered together headed by the beauteous Rosanna Carteri as Mimi; and with Ferruccio Tagliavini as ring leader of a group of Bohemians that includes Taddei, Siepi and Latinucci, the singing, as may well be imagined, is on a high level throughout the performance. Miss Carteri brings to the role of Mimi a certain dignity, which, coupled with the essential pathos of the character, makes her delineation of the unhappy girl a noteworthy one. Her voice is a clear, lyric soprano, even throughout its range; and it is always handled with taste and style. Tagliavini, of course, is well known to opera lovers in this country, and his Rodolfo is good, both vocally and histrionically. The aria *Che gelida manina* is delivered in robust fashion, and the duet that concludes the first act is deftly sung by both artists, although a high C at the end is indulged in for reasons best known to Tagliavini. Taddei and Siepi are both superb vocalists and Taddei is also an artist. In all fairness, however, it must be stated that Siepi's *Vecchia zimara* is excellently projected. Latinucci, as Schaunard, gives a good account of himself and the part. The lesser roles are well performed and add considerably to the success of the recording.

Gabriele Santini keeps matters well in hand and

the resultant performance has verve and polish. Cetra has supplied what appears to be the ultimate in libretti and notes. There are illustrations, drawings, a caricature (by Caruso, no less) and pictures of the singers, all of which are of absorbing interest and add immeasurably to the listener's enjoyment. W.

Caruso in Faust. Enrico Caruso (tenor), Geraldine Farrar (soprano), Jean Gilibert (mezzo-soprano), Antonio Scotti (baritone), Marcel Journet (bass) with orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (\$V-WCT-1103) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1103) \$5.72.

It was in the middle of January 1910 that a group of the world's greatest singers converged on the recording studios in Camden, N. J. The artists were Mmes. Farrar and Gilibert and Messrs. Caruso, Journet and Scotti—the purpose was to record portions of the world's most popular opera, Gounod's *Faust*. The results of the several recording sessions have long been recognized as truly great phonographic achievements. Certainly there has been very little to equal and virtually nothing to surpass the magnificent singing that was captured on wax on those memorable days. To be sure, the means were primitive; but, even so, the greatness of the artistry shines through even to this day. The present LP disc is a transcription of most of the waxes made at that time plus two others; a *Salut demeure* made in 1906 and a *Jewel Song* made in 1913. Neither of these items is touched with the magic of the others.

The record begins with the finale to Act I *O merveille* superbly sung by Caruso and Journet. Then come the two excerpts noted above that are something of a disappointment. The *Salut demeure* has been better sung on many occasions, notably on records by Martinelli in his incredible performance, circa 1920. Miss Farrar's *Jewel Song* is capricious and arbitrary. Things take a turn for the better with an ingenious performance of the garden scene quartet *Seigneur Dieu*, wherein Caruso is joined by Farrar, Gilibert and Journet—the star of this excerpt being the magnificent Journet. The duet *Laisse-moi*, by Farrar and Caruso, sets an unapproachable example of how this impassioned music should be sung. The great aria that closes the act *Il m'aime* is sung by Miss Farrar and is indescribably beautiful. Journet's sardonic laughter at the close is a touch of genius. The duel trio (Caruso, Scotti and Journet) is stirring; especially fine are Caruso's ringing B flats. The final trio as sung by Farrar, Caruso and Journet is another tremendous affair—far above the efforts of most present day singers. One regrets the necessity (if it was necessary) that precluded the use of the wonderful opening duet of the prison scene *Mon cœur est pénétré d'épouvanter* that was recorded at the same time. *

Hear these *Faust* selections in all events and promptly be spoiled for subsequent performances by other singers. W.

"Critic's Choice." Selected by Irving Kolodin. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-1115) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1115) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Scarlatti: *Le Violette* (Tito Schipa); Handel: *Semele*—Where'er You Walk (Lawrence Tibbett); Handel: *Semele*—Oh, Sleep! Why Dost Thou Leave Me (Dorothy Maynor); Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Venite, Inginochiati (Elisabeth Schumann); Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Dove sono (Maria Cebotari); Chopin: *Impromptu in A-flat, Op. 29* (Sigrid Onegin); Wolf: *Kennst du das Land* (Kerstin Thorborg); Massenet: *Hérodiade*—Salomé! Salomé! (John Charles Thomas); Wagner: *Lohengrin*—In Fernem Land (Richard Crooks); Verdi: *Falstaff*—E sogno? (Leonard Warren); R. Strauss: *Ariadne*—So war es mit Pagliazzo (Maria Ivogün).

An interesting and, at the same time, an irritating disc is "Critic's Choice," a group of eleven pieces, all of which, with two exceptions, were issued in this country during the period 1928-1940. The interest lies in the making available of some of the treasures buried in RCA Victor's vaults. The irritation, and it is purely personal, is occasioned by the writer's thoughts of what might have been selected—although this is the fate of all anthologies.

It must be stated at the outset that Mr. Kolodin's selections are all good; the singing is of a superior order in each case. Schipa's record of Scarlatti's *Le Violette* is breathtaking in its beauty. Surprising, in view of his other activities, is the only word for Tibbett's superb vocalizing in the exquisite *Where'er you walk*. This reviewer never admired Miss Maynor's *Oh sleep! Why etc.* The voice is wonderful but the singing seems wooden. Concerning the choice of Miss Cebotari's magnificent *Dove sono* one can only add a hearty "Amen!" Not enough credit (none in fact) is given Josef Krips for his sensitive and inspired direction that contributes so much to the surpassingly successful performance. The last item on the first side is Mme. Onegin's performance of Chopin's *Impromptu in A Flat*. For a critic who objects to Schubert orchestrated and Handel arias with piano accompaniment, it seems inconsistent to include a vocal arrangement of a piano work. Despite the amazing vocalizing the selection has virtually no musical merit—it is an empty show piece—there were far superior Onegin discs, notably the Meyerbeer excerpts that show this magnificent singer in her true musical and artistic stature.

Side two opens with Kirsten Thorborg singing a Wolf song, *Kennst du das Land*. It is, of course, sung to perfection. John Charles Thomas always impressed this reviewer as having one of the finest voices of all time but so often he lacked imagination (and at times good taste). He was happiest in the French repertoire and the excerpt from *Hérodiade* is one of his better efforts—hardly immortal, however. The selection of Crook's *In fernem Land* seems

arbitrary—ditto Warren's *Falstaff* excerpt. The Strauss *Ariadne* aria by Maria Ivogün is a dazzling display of vocal pyrotechnics. Her art and ability could, one feels, have been expended in a more profitable direction.

The quality of the disc is very good considering the age of the originals; the surface noise is very low.

W.

Puccini: Madama Butterfly (abridged). (Sung in Italian). Toti dal Monte (soprano), Beniamino Gigli (tenor), Mario Basiola (baritone), Orchestra and Chorus of the Royal Opera House (Rome) conducted by Oliviero de Fabritiis. 9-7" discs in box (øV-WCT-6006) \$11.44. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6006) \$11.44.

One of the really fine operatic performances recorded on 78 rpm discs was the dal Monte—Gigli collaboration on Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*. The original recording dates from 1939/40 and both artists were at the height of their powers. Miss dal Monte's Cio-Cio-San has been extravagantly admired in some quarters, but this corner has always felt her delineation was a bit too fragile; however, a re-hearing on these well engineered LP's was quite impressive. There is a clarity and a pathos about her performance that is very persuasive. Gigli, of course, is Gigli—the liquid, velvety voiced tenor. In this role he suppresses his occasional tendencies togulp and sob with the result that his B. F. Pinkerton is a superior characterization. The third member, Mario Basiola does very well as the consul, Sharpless. The direction by Oliviero de Fabritiis is relaxed at all times and is a model of good taste and judgement.

Comparisons of this performance and the two other recorded versions offer a bit of a problem. Insofar as recorded sound is concerned, obviously the London recording (TNR Apr. '52) is tops. In addition, Renata Tebaldi is a superb Butterfly; but Campora is definitely no Gigli. There is a further complication—the Victor set is cut (admittedly) and is contained on two records, the London takes three, as does the Columbia set with Steber and Tucker. In order of preference then, this reviewer would choose the present version with the London a close second. It is, in all events, a difficult choice because of Tebaldi and superb *ffff* sound on one hand and Gigla and dal Monte on the other. Perhaps one should buy both?

W.

Gluck: Iphigenia in Tauris (complete). (Sung in French). Patricia Neway (soprano), Leopold Simoneau (tenor), Pierre Mollet (baritone), Robert Massard (bass) with chorus and Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by Carlo Maria Giulini. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7822) \$11.90.

An interesting operatic first recording is issued this month by Vox. Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* will be new to most music lovers and for this fact alone will command considerable interest. The opera was the last in the fireworks that attended the

famous Piccini-Gluck feud. Both composers were given the same libretto to set and Gluck finished his score two years before his rival. In addition, a little ridicule aided Gluck for when Piccini's version finally reached the stage the leading lady was visibly drunk. This caused one writer to observe that this was not "Iphigénie en Tauride but Iphigénie en Champagne." That apparently did it, as the saying goes, and the feud died of old age.

The cast for this recording is only fair. Miss Neway is a wooden Iphigénie. Perhaps some of the lack of color in her performance comes from a lack of understanding of the style. There are few singers today who are able to sing this music adequately. She is vocally competent but so much more is required for a good performance—and, unfortunately, a good voice and excellent method are all Miss Neway is able to bring to her task. The three men, listed variously as tenor, baritone and bass all sound like tenors. Of these, Leopold Simoneau is the best. He delivers the music of Orestes with considerable dramatic force, rolling his R's and embodying a good deal of expression in the part. His aria, *Dieux qui me poursuivez* is a fine job, indeed. Pierre Mollet sings Pylade in a more than adequate manner but one is hard put to think of M. Mollet as a baritone. As King Thoas, Robert Massard is colorless, mechanical and certainly no bass. Maestro Giulini and the Paris Conservatory Orchestra play well and imbue the performance with much of its life.

The music throughout the opera is good. It is typical of the composer and is, in fact, one of his best scores. This recording should serve to familiarize many with the music, which has a grandeur and eloquence that are quite unique. The extravagant language is matched in the music and the whole is a real musical experience.

Unfortunately Vox had an attack of niggardliness and have come up with one of the poorest libretti this reviewer has ever seen. It is a miserable photostat, has very fine print and boasts of such a "free" translation that a note is included advising that "the English version is not an exact translation from the French." There are no notes.

W.

Rimsky-Korsakov: May Night (complete). (Sung in Russian). Irina Maslennikova (soprano), Valentina Borisenko (mezzo-soprano), Serge Lemeshov (tenor), Serge Krasovsky (bass), Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Opera conducted by Vassily Nebolsin. 3-12" discs in album (*VAN-VRS-6006/8) \$18.50.

A bit of real curiosa has been issued by Vanguard—the *rara avis* in this instance being Rimsky-Korsakov's melodious opera *May Night*. The first performance of the work was at the famous Maryinsky Theatre at St. Petersburg in January 1880. Apparently it failed to please, for it was soon withdrawn and did not re-appear until fourteen years later, this time in Prague. It returned to Russia, by way of a per-

formance in 1898 in Moscow, where it now holds the stage by virtue of its piquant orchestration and graceful melodies.

The story is not characteristically Russian, being happy and somewhat humorous. The plot is a slight one, based on one of Gogol's Malo-Russian tales, and need not be repeated here. The cast for the performance contains only one familiar name, that of Serge Lemeshov. Lemeshov is a veteran tenor who sings the role of Levko, the hero. His sweetheart Gonna, is sung by Valentina Borisenko. Both singers are only average, but neither very good nor very bad. Lemeshov's voice is limited in range and his top notes are forced. Borisenko is a mezzo, rather light, but not unpleasant. Gulova, the third principal, is sung by Serge Krasovsky, a basso of limited capabilities who, nonetheless, makes the most of his opportunities. Others in the cast are generally adequate with perhaps special mention for Peter Valovov's fine work as the village lush, Kalmick.

The main interest attaches to the music, and the interest lies primarily in its novelty. How it will wear is largely a matter of personal taste, this corner being of the opinion that one hearing will suffice for some time.

The performance is a sprightly one, moving along with spirit and genuine musical feeling. It is light weight, however, and relatively undistinguished—indeed, in these respects, it is typical of its composer. Vanguard has done an excellent job in refurbishing the original tapes and the recording is free of the rattles and buzzes that are characteristic of Soviet techniques. An English libretto is furnished.

W.

CHORAL



Farnaby: Canzonets. Oriana Singers conducted by Charles M. Hobbs. One side, and **Farnaby: Virginals Music.** Blanche Winogron (virginals). 1-12" disc (*EMS-5) \$5.95.

Monteverdi Selections. Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble directed by Nadia Boulanger. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9627) \$5.85.

French Renaissance Vocal Music. Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble directed by Nadia Boulanger. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9629) \$5.85.

One side of this first recording of the music of Farnaby (1560-1600) contains works for the virginals, the simplest and oldest form of stringed keyboard instrument, and the other contains canzonets (in this instance a misnomer for madrigals). Farnaby, who apparently ranks with Byrd and Gibbons as a composer, does not find the happiest expression for his virginals music in Blanche Winogron. Her rather confused, hesitant style shows insufficient mastery of her instrument. Indeed, her chief contribution to Farnaby's art might well have been achieved by playing the sonatas of Bach. The vocal side of this record is quite professional and

is in the best madrigal tradition. Reproduction is thin.

Mme. Boulanger gives us a Monteverdi devoid of almost all authenticity, a Monteverdi who is in parts more to be compared with Rossini than with Byrd. All severity and purity of the melodic lines and balance of parts is absent, for the soloists seem not to respect the requirements of the madrigal.

The results she achieves with French Renaissance music are somewhat more successful, providing in that recording a wholesome mediocrity. We think the Lady doth molest too much.

C.

VOCAL



Martyn Green's Gilbert and Sullivan. Martyn Green (baritone) with Columbia Operetta Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4643) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: A Modern Major-General ("Pirates of Penzance"); When I Was a Lad ("H.M.S. Pinafore"); I've Jibe and Joke, I Have a Song to Sing, Oh! A Private Buffoon ("Yeoman of the Guard"); The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring, There Is Beauty in the Bellows of the Blast (with Ella Halman), I've Got a Little List, Tit-willow ("The Mikado"); If You Give Me Your Attention, Whenever I Spoke ("Princess Ida"); Am I Alone ("Patience"); When I Went to the Bar, The Law is True, The Nightmare Song ("Iolanthe"); The Judge's Song ("Trial By Jury").

For those whose tastes in Gilbert and Sullivan do not run to complete operettas, here is a delightful collection of many of the patter songs rendered by the incomparable Martyn Green. Mr. Green does not make the common mistake of singing these numbers at break-neck speed; thus, all the words are readily understandable. The reproduction on this LP disc is excellent.

Millöcker: Der Bettelstudent. (Sung in German). Viennese Light Opera Company conducted by Robert Stoltz. 1-12" disc (*PE-RL-1901) \$5.95.

Stoltz: Zwei Herzen im Drei Viertel Takt. (Sung in German). Viennese Light Opera Company conducted by Robert Stoltz. 1-12" disc (*PE-RL-1902) \$5.95.

O. Strauss: A Waltz Dream. (Sung in German). Viennese Light Opera Company conducted by Oscar Straus. 1-12" disc (*PE-RL-1903) \$5.95.

O. Strauss: The Last Waltz. (Sung in German). Viennese Light Opera Company conducted by Oscar Straus. 1-12" disc (*PE-RL-1904) \$5.95.

We are sorry to say that these are but routine performances of these popular Viennese operettas. The reproduction is certainly substandard; this is particularly noticeable in the recording of the orchestra and the chorus—the solo voices come through fairly well. It may be that you are sufficiently inter-

ested in having a nearly complete rendition of these operettas to overlook the shortcomings of these recordings; however, we suggest that you listen before you buy.

PIANO



Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 2, No. 2.** Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4622) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 17 in D minor, Op. 31, No. 2 ("The Tempest"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in C, Op. 2, No. 3.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-627) \$5.95.

Beethoven: (33) Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op. 120. Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7730) \$5.95.

Of course, there are a number of other recordings of the Beethoven Sonatas played by Casadesus and Backhaus. However, admirers of these two great pianists will doubtless be glad to learn that their versions are now available. . . . Of particular interest is the first LP recording of Beethoven's famous Diabelli Variations which the great musicologist, Donald Tovey, has called "the greatest set of variations ever written." We are glad to report that Horszowski does a fine job and that Vox has supplied excellent reproduction.

Maryla Jonas Plays Piano Miniatures. Maryla Jonas (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4624) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Passacaglia in G minor (Handel); Turkish March (Mozart); Serenade (Schubert); Music Box (Nicholas); Music Box Lullaby (Thompson); Capriccio (W. F. Bach); Song Without Words No. 4 in G minor, Op. 102 and Song Without Words No. 1 in C, Op. 62 (Mendelssohn); Consolation, Op. 62 (Dussek); Bolero and Gallop (Cassela).

A group of delightful little keyboard pieces will be found on this attractive LP disc superbly played by Maryla Jonas and faithfully recorded by Columbia.

Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 90. One side, and

Schubert: (4) Impromptus, Op. 142. Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1146) \$5.95.

Schubert: Sonata in A, Op. 120. One side, and

Schubert: Moments Musicaux, Op. 94. Robert Goldsand (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1148) \$5.95.

All of this Schubert keyboard music is already available, and thus we are simply listing these discs so that our readers will know that they have been released.

Ives: Sonata No. 1 (1902-1909). William Masselos (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4490) \$5.45.

Those interested in music of our own country will be delighted to know that there is now available an excellent recording of Charles Ives' first sonata which dates from (1902-1909). This unique work by "the most American of our American composers" is played with authority and a fine sense of feeling by the very accomplished pianist, William Masselos.

ORGAN



Bach Festival. E. Power Biggs (organ) with Roger Voisin, Armando Ghittala, Marcel LaFosse (trumpets); Jacob Raichman, Josef Orosz (trombones); Ernst Panenka (bassoon); Roman Szulc (timpani). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4635) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Cantata No. 79—"Now Thank We All Our God; Weihnachts-Oratorium—Good News from Heaven (3 versions); Cantata No. 140 ("Sleepers, Awake!") (2 versions); *How Brightly Shines the Morning Star* (brass quartet) (2 versions); *Anna Magdalene Notebook*—Deal with Me, Father, As Thou Wildest To Thee, Jehova, Do We Sing (brass quartet); (3) *Wedding Chorales* ("What God Hath Done Is Rightly Done") ("Now Therefore Bless the Lord of All") ("Now Thank We All Our God"); (3) *Concerted Chorales* ("To Thee Alone Be Glory") ("Praise to the Lord, the Almighty") ("Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"); (5) *Chorales* ("Deck Thyself, O Soul, with Gladness") ("My Heart Is Ever Yearning") ("All Glory, Laud and Honor") ("What God Doth, That Alone is Right") ("Now All the Woods are Sleeping") ("A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"—2 versions) (Bach). *Chorale Prelude for Trumpet and Organ* (Krebs). *When Adam Fell* (Homilius).

The distinguished organist E. Power Biggs with assisting artists gives us on this fine LP disc some glorious Bach music with the addition of two selections by two of Bach's favorite pupils Ludwig Krebs (*Chorale Prelude for Trumpet and Organ*) and Gottfried August Homilius (*When Adam Fell*—trumpet solo with organ). This truly inspiring music has been most faithfully recorded by Columbia and thus those interested in music of this character will find this record one of unique excellence.

French Baroque Organ Music. Clarence Watters, playing the organ in St. John's Church, West Hartford (Conn.). 2-12" discs in album (*CLASSIC-CE-1008) \$11.90.

While the progress of recorded music marches on, or rather galops on since the LP renaissance, it has swept with it previously dormant types of recorded music, notably organ music. The present series being recorded by Clarence Watters will culminate in a survey of the French school of organ composition

that would be nearly impossible to hear except on records. Watters, one of our greatest living performers of French organ music, covers the field from the early examples right through the contemporary scene. And these are not trifling samples, but rather generous helpings which give a complete and satisfying view of this great music.

The present album is as carefully chosen as it is beautifully executed. The composers represented are Clérambault, Dandrieu, Marchand, DuMage, François Couperin, Siret, Le Bègue (five selections), Jullien, Raison, Loeillet, Balbastre, and D'Aquin. Watters plays five of the D'Aquin *Noëls* complete: Nos. 1, 3, 9, 10, and 12, which include the famous "Sur les Flutes" and "Grand Jeu et Duo." All of the selections are chosen from the best examples of the works of these masters. Watters plays this music superbly; it would be hard to imagine better renditions. The organ used is an Austin designed by Richard Piper and is one of the finest sounding Baroque jobs yet to reach records. It often sounds like the famous Silbermanns, and must be one of the finest of present day Baroque organs. The reproduction is excellent in range and balance and particularly in clarity. This set has our highest recommendation, and we believe many music lovers other than dyed-in-the-wool organists will find it highly enjoyable. S.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: (6) French Suites. Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-310) \$18.50.

This is unquestionably a connoisseur's item. If one can enjoy and thoroughly appreciate these suites for harpsichord he can validly claim to be a Bach student and indeed a musical intellectual. Those in that class will find that this music has been superbly played by the distinguished harpsichordist, Fernando Valenti, and that it has been recorded with rare fidelity by Westminster.

We might mention that a very nicely printed booklet containing the miniature scores of the six suites is included with this set of records.

MISCELLANEOUS



International Folk Music Festival ("International Musical Eisteddfod"). Recorded at Llangollen, North Wales (July 1952) under the auspices of the International Music Council (UNESCO), with Jack Bornoff (narrator). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-209) \$11.90.

As we listened to the present recording we became so enthusiastic that we had the urge to write a lengthy article about it. However, we realize that its appeal will be limited, and thus with space at a premium we must make our remarks as brief as possible. If we can whet the appetites of those who

might be interested sufficiently to have them investigate this unique recording we will have accomplished our purpose.

This recording was made under the auspices of the International Music Council (UNESCO) at the International Musical Eisteddfod held at Llangollen, in Wales during July 1952. The narrator is Jack Bornoff, the Executive Secretary of the International Music Council, and his highly intelligent and illuminating remarks from time to time as the recording proceeds make one feel that he is actually at the Eisteddfod with the gay crowds who are so thoroughly enjoying the festival. Mr. Bornoff has supplied excellent notes that give a brief history of these ancient Welsh music festivals with special emphasis on their importance in the present work of the International Music Council in implementing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for men "freely to participate in the cultural life of the community and to enjoy the arts." Mr. Bornoff carefully identifies each selection heard on these records in his notes with an interesting fact or two about them.

Competing groups of singers and dancers from over a dozen countries of the world including the United States came to Llangollen last summer for this great international folk music and dance festival. To study Mr. Bornoff's notes and listen to these recordings might very well constitute a short course, a very short one, in the folk music of Europe and the British Isles—the vast majority of the contestants came from that territory.

This review isn't brief enough but we did wish our readers to know something of this outstanding recording in the field of musical folklore. R.

El Pili (Flamenco music). Pedro Jimenez (*cantaor*) and Mario Escudero and Alberto Velez (Flamenco guitars). 1-10" disc (*ESO-ES-2001) \$4.85.

This is one of the finest examples of Flamenco music available today, both from the standpoints of performance and of reproduction. The disc derives its title, "El Pili," from the professional name of the singer (or *cantaor*), Pedro Jiminez, well known to Flamenco *aficionados* as a member of "Los Chavalillos Sevillanos," now on world tour. Alberto Velez is also a member of this troupe. Mario Escudero, who has been called the "virtuoso of the Flamenco guitar," has just concluded a season with the well-known Carmen Amaya in Paris and is now on tour with her.

The impeccable guitar playing on this disc must be heard to be believed! "El Pili's" incantations fairly breathe the Flamencan spirit. As mentioned above, the reproduction is superb. Flamencan collectors and students of the classical guitar should not miss this disc.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hodyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyrichord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—OL'seau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

The New Records

May 19 A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

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"The World's Record Shop"

10TH & WALNUT STREETS

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MAY, 1953

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

BIRD lovers attention! Here is a perfectly fascinating LP record recently released by the Cornell University Press. It is called *Music and Bird Songs: Sounds from nature with commentary and analysis*. It is a 10-inch LP disc, and the price is \$5.

This recording was prepared by James H. Fassett, Supervisor of Music for CBS, and Professor P. P. Kellogg, Associate Professor of Ornithology at Cornell University. These gentlemen selected a number of recordings of birds, frogs and toads from the huge collection of such recordings in the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University; and Mr. Fassett prepared a most interesting and illuminating commentary. In the course of his commentary Mr. Fassett introduces the various bird and animal recordings and, after playing them just as they were heard in the woods and fields, he analyzes them by reducing the speed to one-half and one-quarter; thus each of the many notes that make up the calls and songs may be identified. To us this was one of the most fascinating features of this unique record.

As this record will have a quite limited appeal, not many record shops will stock it. If your local dealer cannot supply it, orders sent direct to the publishers of THE NEW RECORDS will be promptly filled. Just request Music and Bird Songs (Cornell University Press)—Price \$5.

* * *

Occasionally, every few years—every decade, perhaps—there occurs a recording so excellent that it is immediately recognized as a rare and priceless masterpiece. Arturo Toscanini has just given us a recording of the nine Beethoven Symphonies; since these symphonies are considered to be the greatest sequence of orchestral compositions, and since Maestro Toscanini is thought by many to be one of the outstanding interpreters of Beetho-

ven, we feel that here is just such a masterpiece, in limited edition.

RCA Victor has spared no effort to present an attractive edition. The album contains 7-12" discs and has padded covers of simulated leather; imbedded in the front cover (but removable) is a bronze facsimile of a medal presented to Toscanini in 1916 by the members of the Orchestra of Turin, depicting the Maestro's profile on one side, and containing a facsimile of his signature on the reverse. Twenty-two pages are bound into the album; on these pages, in addition to interesting photographs of various incidents in Toscanini's life, may be found: a biography of the conductor; a critique entitled "Beethoven and Toscanini" by Samuel Chotzinoff; a brief history of the NBC Symphony; dates of the present recordings; and program notes on each of the symphonies.

Three of the symphonies (the First, Third and Ninth) contained in this edition are already available in the Victor catalog; this fact in no way detracts, however, from the desirability of this limited (4,000 copies) edition; the owner of a numbered set of these recordings will have an item to enjoy and to be proud of for as long as he is interested in record collecting.

Those interested should place their orders with their dealers promptly. RCA Victor Set *V-LM-6900; price \$52.40.

* * *

We have received the announcement from RCA Victor that it has combined its "Music America Loves Best" catalog and its "Request" catalog into one general catalog to be called the RCA Victor Catalog. It contains listings of all RCA Victor records presently available.

Also just published by RCA Victor is its Educational Catalog, the first such catalog to be issued in many years. It contains listings of basic graded libraries for elementary schools,

records for children of pre-school ages, records aimed at interesting children in classical music, folk dances, international music, and so on.

Available, too, is the 1952/3 "His Master's Voice" (English—78 rpm only) catalog, which will be of interest to collectors of imported records.

Any of these catalogs may be ordered from the publishers of this bulletin. The RCA Victor General Catalog (488 pp.) is 50c; the Educational Catalog (90 pp.) is 20c; and the HMV catalog (523 pp.) is 50c. These prices include postage to any point in U. S. A.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning May 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Mascagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (complete). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of CETRA conducted by Arturo Basile. Three sides, and **Leoncavallo:** *I Pagliacci* (complete). Soloists, EIAR Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1233) \$17.85. (TNR Aug. '52 & Dec. '51).

Dvořák: *Slavonic Dances*, Op. 72 (complete). Czech Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Vaclav Talich. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7079) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '53).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Our studio has been flooded with releases of overtures, waltzes and the like recently released by several manufacturers. Due to severe space limitations we cannot consider each issue separately; but because we feel that many of our readers would like to know of the release of these extremely popular items, we are listing them below.

Strauss: *Roses from the South*, Op. 388. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. One side, and **Strauss:** *Wine, Women and Song*, Op. 333. Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4042) \$2.50.

Verdi: *Sicilian Vespers*—Overture. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. One side, and **Boieldieu:** *Caliph of Bagdad*—Overture. And **Adam:** *Si J'Etais Roi*—Overture. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4046) \$2.50.

Brahms: *Academic Festival Overture*, Op. 80. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. One side, and **Brahms:** *Tragic Overture*, Op. 81. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4048) \$2.50.

Beethoven: *Fidelio*—Overture. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and **Beethoven:** *Ruins of Athens*—Overture. And **Beethoven:** *Prometheus Overture*, Op. 43. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiger. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4047) \$2.50.

Dvořák: *Carnaval Overture*, Op. 92. One side, and **Berlioz:** *Beatrice and Benedict*—Overture. N. Y. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4034) \$2.50.

Wagner: *Die Walküre*—Ride of the Valkyries. Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and **Wagner:** *Lohengrin*—Prelude to Act I. And **Wagner:** *Lohengrin*—Prelude to Act III. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4030) \$2.50.

Wagner: *Die Meistersinger*—Prelude. One side, and **Wagner:** *Die Meistersinger*—Dance of the Apprentices. And **Wagner:** *Die Meistersinger*—Entrance of the Meistersinger. Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4037) \$2.50.

Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde*—Prelude and Love Death. Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4038) \$2.50.

Mozart: *Cosi Fan Tutte*—Overture. And **Mozart:** *Don Giovanni*—Overture. One side, and **Mozart:** *Magic Flute*—Overture. And **Mozart:** *La Clemenza di Tito*—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4035) \$2.50.

Mozart: *Il Seraglio*—Overture. And **Mozart:** *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Overture. One side, and **Mozart:** *Idomeneo*—Overture. And **Mozart:** *Der Schauspieldirektor*—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4036) \$2.50.

Bizet: *Carmen*—Suite No. 1. One side, and **Bizet:** *Carmen*—Suite No. 2. N. Y. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Salvatore dell' Isola. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4029) \$2.50.

R. Strauss: Salome—Dance of the Seven Veils. One side, and **R. Strauss: Der Rosenkavalier**—Waltz. N. Y. Stadium Concerts Symphony Orchestra conducted by Alexander Smallens. 1-10" disc (*DL-4032) \$2.50.

(7) **Operatic Intermezzi**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schuechter. 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-131) \$3.

CONTENTS: Cavalleria Rusticana; Pagliacci; Carmen, Act 2; Carmen, Act 4; I Quattro Rusteghi; L'Amico Fritz; Jewels of the Madonna, Act 3.

Wagner: Die Feen—Overture. And **Wagner: Das Liebesverbot**—Overture. One side, and **Wagner: Rienzi**—Overture. And **Wagner: Der fliegende Holländer**—Overture. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7069) \$5.95.

Mozart: Les Petits Riens—Ballet Music. One side, and **Mozart: (6) Overtures**. Stuttgart Tonstudio Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-559) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Cosi Fan Tutte; Clemenza di Tito; Finta Giardiniera; Il Re Pastore; Der Schauspieldirektor; Bastien et Bastienne.

ORCHESTRA



Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch"). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8192) \$5.72.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op. 56 ("Scotch"). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-708) \$5.95.

The steady popularity of the *Italian Symphony* has placed the *Scotch* in a poor second place among Mendelssohn symphonies. While the popularity of the *Italian* is understandable, every hearing of the *Scotch* causes us to wonder why this symphony is not a great deal more popular. It is in many ways a better work, as well it might be, since it was composed long after the *Italian*; the business of numbering symphonies is once again misleading in this matter. The *Scotch* symphony was undoubtedly inspired by a visit to Scotland, but it was not composed immediately in the heat of inspiration; rather it was completed thirteen years later. Thus we have a work which is the product of a fully matured musician, with an inspiration that had gained good perspective and had a chance to be fused with other musical experience. The result is a work which stands at the top of Mendelssohn's symphonies as a fine work, not just a descriptive nor programmatic work. Mendelssohn disclaimed any program for the work, although there is admittedly a musical connection with the Palace of Holyrood House in Edinburgh, particularly its chapel. Here is symphonic writing by Mendelssohn at his very best.

The two recordings here under consideration are both excellent. Steinberg has a more vital and ener-

getic approach, in good control, not flamboyant, but genuinely enthusiastic. It is not only a reading of great vitality, but also an orchestral performance of the same calibre, for the orchestra responds superbly. In this respect Steinberg and Klemperer are about on a par and head the list of recorded versions (Klemperer *VX-PL-7080). In the matter of reproduction, London and Capitol are quite different. Capitol's disc has a big, luscious, blooming tone, with good string quality, but will be marred for many by excessive reverberation; it did not annoy us, but we admit it is there. London's recording is a closer job with more clarity, although it has a rather thin and nasal string tone. You will do well to find out which sounds better on your set and to your ears, for each is quite different in its characteristics. S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 3 in C, Op. 52. One side, and **Sibelius: Symphony No. 7 in C, Op. 105**. Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sixten Ehrling. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10125) \$4.85.

Mercury plans to offer all seven symphonies of Sibelius by the same orchestra and conductor. So far, the *First*, *Third* and *Seventh* have been issued, and if they hurry up, they will have the first LP's on the market of the *Fourth* and *Sixth*. If the whole series is of an excellence comparable to this disc it will be a worthy project. The Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra has long been regarded as one of the three finest in Scandinavia. Sixten Ehrling is Sweden's most brilliant young conductor of the post World War Two era, and is thoroughly schooled by circumstance and environment and by intense study in the most authentic and vital traditions with respect to the proper performance and interpretation of the Sibelius symphonies.

It is fortunate that we have such an able interpreter for the *Third Symphony* which appears for the first time on LP. The *Third* begins a new type of symphonic writing for Sibelius, who forsook the romantic utterances of the first two symphonies and also the orchestration and devices of European and Slavic musical romanticism. After Sibelius and his family moved to Jarvenpaa, in the country away from the distractions of city life in Helsinki, he began a lifelong communion with nature—the Finnish lakes and forests, the sounds of wind and of water. Music which was more clearly defined and more truly Sibelius, as we now know him, was the result. The *Third Symphony* is clearly a departure from the ones which preceded it. The *Seventh Symphony*, his last, is a good pairing. It is the achievement of a true synthesis of classic and romantic-nationalist tradition, maintaining an uncompromising integrity of musical personality.

We found Ehrling's performances magnificent and the reproduction of them among today's best. He has a directness of approach befitting the music, yet there is abundant power and feeling. The orchestra responds with some glorious playing and proves to

be a first class group of fine polish and lovely tone. A splendid disc in every respect, which we highly recommend.

S.

Haydn: Symphony No. 70 in D and Mozart: Overture in B-flat, K. 311a ("Paris"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 54 in G.** Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Academy of Music conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-32) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 12 in E and Haydn: Symphony No. 23 in G. One side, **Haydn: Symphony No. 30 in C ("Alleluja")** and **Haydn: Symphony No. 29 in E.** Chamber Orchestra of the Vienna State Academy of Music conducted by Wilhelm Leibner. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-36) \$5.95.

Haydn: Symphony No. 93 in D. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 88 in G.** Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5178) \$5.95.

Avoiding the unfortunate fallacy that Haydn and Mozart were precursors of Beethoven rather than composers whose art was as independent and fully developed as the latter's music was, the Vienna Chamber Orchestra under Hans Swarowsky offers a recording which is among the few to give evidence to the fact that the music of the two Giants bears greater resemblance to that of the Baroque period which preceded them than to that of the late classical period which followed. Swarowsky, avoiding the pale, overly delicate type of performance, executes a vital colorful reading which could well serve as a model for those who make the Haydn-Mozart School sound like a dull conglomeration of nervous superficialities. Like Ralph Kirkpatrick who has striven (and succeeded) to give us a "life size Mozart" (*Bartók BRS-912), Swarowsky is one of the few artists who can see the classicists from the other side of 1750.

Wilhelm Leibner's recording of four previously unrecorded Haydn Symphonies gives them a somewhat too sensational entrance into the phonographic repertoire. His rushed, violently energetic performance does not compensate for the smallness of the music, which we assume was its intention.

Continuing in his project to improve the Haydn Symphonies, Dr. Scherchen wields his musical ax to carve for recorded eternity the image of Brünnhilde riding over the Esterhazy Estate.

C.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 64. Hamburg Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-691) \$5.95.

It has been a long time since any performance of the old Tchaikovsky Fifth has given us as much pleasure as this one. It has a large, romantic spaciousness about it very rare in today's performances.

It is admittedly played with generally slower tempos than nearly any other LP version. One disadvantage of this disc is that the second movement is broken—half on side one, half on side two. The quality of recorded tone is rich and thick and quite in keeping with the style of performance. It is not as sharp as many current LP's, and has a resoundingly full bass which is exceptionally clear for its weight. The conductor takes a traditional cut in the last movement which we would prefer he had not done; it seems unnecessary to do this in an LP recording. The over-all impression left by this reading, however, remains satisfying, and it is the style we enjoy in a Tchaikovsky symphony.

Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt is permanent director of the Hamburg Radio Symphony Orchestra, a responsible position in present-day Germany. This orchestra is a thoroughly excellent one, as you can hear in the present recording. The conductor made many records for Telefunken before and during the last war when he was one of the most promising of the younger conductors.

With nearly a dozen to choose from, recordings of this popular symphony present a problem to those who do not yet own one. The best all around job which will appeal to most folks is Ormandy and the Philadelphia (*C-ML-4400), and others well worth investigation are Cantelli (*V-LHMV-1003) and Dorati (*ME-MG-50008).

S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 3 in C, Op. 32. National Radio Orchestra conducted by Gauk. One side, and **Glière: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra.** Dulova (harp) with the National Radio Orchestra conducted by Gauk. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-567) \$5.95.

Kalinnikov: Symphony No. 2 in A. National Radio Orchestra conducted by Rachlin. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-566) \$5.95.

The three selections on these two records appear for the first time on LP discs. They are indeed very welcome, and we are glad to report that the foreign tapes have been transferred to these LP discs with great success. Anyone interested in this music may select either of these records with the assurance that the reproduction is of high quality and the record surfaces smooth and quiet.

The Rimsky symphony is an early work, written before the composer had developed into the master of orchestration that he later became. It is not of great importance, but it is interesting as an early milestone in the development of this great musician.

... The Glière Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, which dates from 1938, is not profound from a purely musical viewpoint but a highly lovely selection to listen to; and as harp concertos are rarities, it is a very welcome addition to the repertory of recorded music. We are very sure that it will give many music lovers a great deal of pleasure. ... The Russian composer, Basil Sergeivitch Kalinnikov

(1866-1901) is little known in this country, except perhaps for his first symphony which was recorded a number of years ago by the Indianapolis Symphony under Sevitzky. The present symphony, like his first, abounds in lovely melodies in the Russian idiom and has warmth and a sense of well-being that belies the idea that all things Russian are morbid and somber. One only has to hear this music to appreciate and enjoy it; its charms are certainly not hidden. Perhaps it will pall after repeated hearings; we can't say because it was new to us. We can say, however, that we thoroughly enjoyed the two hearings that we gave it and that we are looking forward to listening to it again at the first opportunity. R.

Wagner: Der Ring des Nibelungen (Orchestral Highlights, Vol. I). Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7063) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Rheingold*—Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla; *Walküre*—Ride of the Valkyries & Magic Fire Music; *Siegfried* Idyll.

Wagner: Der Ring des Nibelungen (Orchestral Highlights, Vol. II). Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7065) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Siegfried*—Interlude (Act III); *Götterdämmerung* — Siegfried's Rhine Journey & Siegfried's Funeral Music & Finale; *Parsifal*—Prelude & Good Friday Spell.

Wagner: Der Ring des Nibelungen (Orchestral Highlights, Vols. I & II). Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-603) \$11.90.

Wagner: Götterdämmerung — Siegfried's Rhine Journey. And **Wagner: Götterdämmerung** — Siegfried' Funeral Music. One side, and **Wagner: Tristan und Isolde**—Prelude and Liebestod. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8185) \$5.72.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Prelude (Act I). And **Wagner: Lohengrin**—Introduction (Act III). One side, and **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Overture. And **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Prelude (Act III). Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7077) \$5.95.

This month we have a rare feast for those music lovers who enjoy fine orchestral Wagnerian recordings. We are happy to report that the performances are all of high excellence and that the reproduction throughout is very satisfactory. You will note that the first two *Urania* records are available singly or may be had together in one album.

Nielsen: Symphony No. 6 ("Sinfonia Semplice"). Danish National Orchestra of the State Radio conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10137) \$4.85.

"Music of the North Vol. 8" in Mercury's series

brings us another symphony by Carl Nielsen, the fourth to be recorded (already on LP are Nos. 1, 3, and 4). Nielsen began work on his sixth, and last, symphony late in 1924, completing the score on 5 December 1925. During this period his life was harassed by ill health and depression and also by the seeming failure of his own work to take hold beyond the borders of his native land. Although he was born in the same year as Sibelius, Nielsen's six symphonies were scarcely known outside of Denmark at the time of his death in 1931, while the seven works in that form by the Finnish master had become part and parcel of the regular concert repertoire, particularly in England and the United States. Since 1950, Nielsen has had many brilliant performances at various Festivals, is being recorded, and appears on orchestra programs more widely.

The *Sixth Symphony* opens deceptively in a simple and easygoing vein, and the first movement is good solid symphonic music. The second movement is called *Humoreske*, and is a sarcastic little piece scored for woodwinds, trombone, snare drum, triangle, and *glockenspiel*—a bitter commentary on the musical modernism of the 1920's. To us this movement is completely out of place in the scheme of the symphony. It would be a mighty clever little selection of its own—or even as part of a suite of some sort—but it sticks out like a sore thumb in this otherwise agreeable work. The third movement is slow, serious, poignant, and a thoughtful, rather sorrowful elegy. The final movement consists of a brief introduction, followed by a theme, nine variations and coda.

The composer's brilliant pupil and protégé, Thomas Jensen, directs a fine performance of this work, clear, concise, and expressive. The Danish orchestra plays admirably and the reproduction is exceptionally good. S.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Ouverture-fantasia). One side, and **Liszt: Les Préludes**. Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 1-12" disc (*CRL-3039) \$3.08.

Glazounov: Raymonda Ballet Suite, Op. 57. One side, and **Glière: The Red Poppy** Ballet Suite No. 2. Orchestra of the National Theatre conducted by Yuri Fayer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-432) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Skazka, Op. 29. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: The Snow Maiden** — Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3017) \$4.85.

Shostakovich: Ballet Suite No. 1 (1950). State Orchestra of USSR conducted by Alexander Gauk. One side, and **Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet** Suite No. 2, Op. 64. Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugene Mravinsky. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6004) \$5.95.

Except for Mengelberg's famous recording of

Liszt's *Les Préludes*, all of these selections are by well-known Russian composers. The two Vanguard discs contain recordings that were taken from tapes that were made in Russia and we are glad to report that our friends behind the Iron Curtain are gradually improving their recording technique so that recent efforts in that field are quite satisfactory.

Beethoven: Coriolan Overture, Op. 62 and **Beethoven: Prometheus Overture, Op. 43**. One side, and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 2, Op. 72** and **Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84**. Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8020) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Fidelio—Overture. And **Beethoven: Consecration of the House Overture, Op. 124**. One side, and **Beethoven: Egmont Overture, Op. 84** and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 2, Op. 72a**. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4647) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 1. And **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 2**. One side, and **Beethoven: Leonore Overture No. 3**. And **Beethoven: Fidelio**—Overture. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5177) \$5.95.

Each, in its way, of these three recordings has substantial merit. Horenstein proffers a well-tempered, meticulous Beethoven which gains in linear clarity and formal firmness what it sacrifices in vitality. His performance is tastefully theatrical in an unusual merger of German Romanticism and Classical form.

Weingartner's merits (this is one of the master's most successful executions) are obscured by the antiquated sound of his recording which is recommended only to those whose interest in the late conductor overshadows their interest in aural quality.

Scherchen's disc logically combines all of the four overtures to Beethoven's Opera, a coupling that is a further indication of the musical intelligence functioning at Westminster. There has never been, to our hearing, a reading of the Fidelio and Leonore Overtures as expansive and justifying to their proportions as this one. When one adds to that the superb fidelity of Westminster's new recording technique (this is one of the highest fidelity records ever produced), one has a disc that few persons should want to miss. C.

Stravinsky: L'Histoire du Soldat. Michele Auclair (Soldier), Marcel Herrand (Devil), Jean Marchat (Reader) with instrumental ensemble directed by Fernand Oubradous. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7960) \$5.95.

This work without formal precedent, designed to be played, recited (in French), and danced simultaneously, is clearly one of the finest pieces produced during this century by any composer. And never

before, not even under his own leadership, has Stravinsky's masterpiece received such an understanding and definitive performance. What in previous recordings had appeared to be dissonances in the music were apparently (after hearing this version) the product of inept and unsympathetic playing. Furthermore the presence of the narrative (included here for the first time) works reciprocally with the music to enhance and more greatly significate both of them.

Alfven: Midsommarvaka ("Midsummer Vigil"). One side, and **Grieg: Peer Gynt Suite No. 1, Op. 46**—Anitra's Dance; In the Hall of the Mountain King. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-35) \$2.85.

Occasionally we hear persons engaged in some phase of the record industry decry the inroads that television has made in the sale of phonograph records. But here is a case where television actually helped the record business. TV fans familiar with the "Omnibus" show (Alistair Cooke et al) will no doubt recall the short film "The Stranger Left No Card," which has been run twice on that show; and in case you were not one of the many hundreds who wrote in to "Omnibus" to inquire about the name of the haunting and tuneful theme of that film, we are happy to advise you that it was none other than the *Midsommarvaka*, more popularly known as "Swedish Rhapsody," here given a fine performance by Ormandy and the Philadelphians.

As it is coupled with the ever-popular *Anitra's Dance* and *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, this disc should enjoy a very nice sale.

Brahms: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 73. NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1731) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1731) \$5.72.

Continuing in his project of recording the Brahms Symphonies, Toscanini gives us what is probably the best version of the Master's second effort in that form. The fine balance of lyric and dramatic qualities, the incisiveness of phrasing and over-all clarity of details, and above all the apparently close adherence to the score provide a wholly excellent performance, aided, not inconsiderably, by Victor's fine new recording technique.

Wagner—arr. Stokowski: Parsifal—Symphonic Synthesis. One side, and **Schubert: Rosamunde** (excerpts). Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1730) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1730) \$5.72.

Stokowski is the supreme master at taking the music such as that of *Parsifal* and developing it into a "Symphonic Synthesis." He has done so in the present instance and under his inspired direction it becomes a recording with an almost universal appeal. Coupling it with excerpts from Schubert's

* indicates LP 88 1/2 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Rosamunde does not in any way lessen its attractiveness. Thus we have an LP disc that should reach the best sellers list immediately and probably stay there for a long time to come.

The jacket and label states that there is also contained on this LP record a recording of the Prelude to Act 1 of *Parsifal*. This is an error that will be corrected on future jackets and labels.

Puccini—trans. Kostelanetz: *La Bohème* (Orchestral Synthesis). Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4655) \$5.45.

Borodin: Prince Igor (Orchestral Suite: Overture, Polovski March, Polovtsian Dances). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3008) \$4.85.

Bizet: Carmen (Orchestral Scenes: Prélude & Entr'acte, Final, Danse Bohème). Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. One side, and **Rossini: Semiramide**—Overture. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-27) \$2.85.

For those who like operatic music arranged for orchestra the three LP discs listed above contain a wealth of such music. It has all been nicely performed and most faithfully recorded. The little Sir Thomas Beecham disc at its modest price is a marvelous value.

Hanson: Symphony No. 2, Op. 30 ("Romantic"). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **MacDowell: Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 23**. Jesús María Sanromá (piano) with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4638) \$5.45.

NOTE: For review of this disc, see under CONCERTO.

CONCERTO



Prokofiev: Concerto No. 1 in D, Op. 19. Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin) with the Radio Zurich Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. One side, and **Stravinsky: Concerto for Piano and Wind Orchestra**. Mewton-Wood (piano) and members of the Residentie Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1160) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: Concerto No. 2 in G minor, Op. 63. Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. One side, and **Bach: Concerto No. 2 in E**. Zino Francescatti (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4648) \$5.45.

The Concert Hall disc of the Prokofiev violin concerto features some splendid violin playing by the young Ricardo Odnoposoff who, though still in his thirties, is a recognized master of his instrument. His performance is formidable competition indeed

for Szigeti and Oistrakh, both of whom have also recorded this work. Considering the quality of reproduction, we would give this disc preference to either of the others. The Stravinsky piano concerto was mentioned in our review in the April TNR, when we said the version conducted by Stravinsky himself superceded this one on the basis of authenticity. As any disciple of Stravinsky would agree, that is true. However, for those who may be interested in this disc for the works that it offers, we would say that Mewton-Wood and Walter Goehr succeed in making this music more palatable by virtue of a less taut performance and a more romantic style of playing, also aided by reproduction of a sweeter variety than offered by Victor. The disc is recommended primarily for the superb violin performance, and for a mighty good sounding, if less authentic reading, of the Stravinsky. We thought the reproduction especially attractive—bright but not brittle.

One of the great fiddlers of our day and quite a favorite with American audiences, Zino Francescatti, appears on a disc with two greatly contrasting works. About the only thing these two have in common is Francescatti's superior playing. The Prokofiev was previously recorded by Heifetz and Koussevitzky and re-issued on Victor's Treasury Series (*V-LCT-6). For various reasons, mostly mechanical, we would choose the newer Francescatti disc. Such a choice gives us the Prokofiev on one side of a twelve-inch disc, compared to both sides of a ten-inch by Heifetz. And on the reverse, Francescatti offers a magnificent reading of one of our all-time favorite concertos, the Bach Second. There are several other fine recordings of this work, but none any better than this; and Szell provides a sparkling accompaniment with a correctly proportioned orchestra, including harpsichord. The reproduction of both sides of this disc is of today's finest. Nothing but praise for this one. S.

MacDowell: Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 23. Jesús María Sanromá (piano) with the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **Hanson: Symphony No. 2, Op. 30** ("Romantic"). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4638) \$5.45.

A previous recording of the MacDowell concerto was reviewed here in the July 1952 issue. It was performed by Alexander Jenner and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Swoboda (*CH-CHS-1137), and we found it to be a good job. The coupling on that disc is MacDowell's *Woodland Sketches* beautifully played by Arthur Balsam. If you wish the concerto, we would almost say that the matter of the coupling could determine which disc to acquire, for both recordings are fine. The present disc has a more brilliant type of reproduction. Sanromá and Hanson offer a reading which is thoroughly idiomatic,

nicely styled, and well played. We discussed the concerto and MacDowell at length in the above mentioned review and refer the reader to that for comment on the work.

Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra recorded the "Romantic" symphony some years ago for Victor, a set now out of print. This is its first LP recording. Composed in 1930 for the fiftieth anniversary of the Boston Symphony, Dr. Hanson at that time supplied this information about the work: "Concerning my Second Symphony, as the subtitle implies, it represents for me a definite and acknowledged embracing of the romantic phase. I recognize, of course, that romanticism is, at the present time, the poor stepchild, without the social standing of her elder sister, neo-classicism. . . . My aim, in this symphony, has been to create a work young in spirit, romantic in temperament, and simple and direct in expression."

Those thoughts appear as sound today as they did two decades ago. The work remains a pleasant composition for those who like listenable, down-to-earth music. It is no watered-down Tchaikovsky; it is not without dissonance. We would suggest that anyone who likes Sibelius would find this work of interest. Hanson and the orchestra present a handsome statement of the music, for he is an accomplished conductor; and the orchestra plays well. S.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25.** José Iturbi (piano) conducting the RCA Victor Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (φV-WDM-1734) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1734) \$5.72.

This pair of concertos belongs squarely in the class of "war-horses," and Iturbi plays them as such. The Liszt "triangle concerto," as its unfortunate nickname identifies it, has been committed to LP discs by several other piano artists of our day, including Rubinstein. The Mendelssohn First Concerto has also had several other successful recordings of late. While everyone jangles and skitters through the Liszt, we doubt whether any of the rest of them play it with a brassier, more percussive effect than Iturbi. His playing is, as usual, very accurate and also exceptionally clean and clear. As a model for one studying this work, it would be hard to beat, for he clearly reveals every note in the score, and the reproduction is inclined to favor the solo instrument, which also adds to the clarity. If you want a really clangy and rousing performance of this old thriller, here it is. The other recordings use different couplings, including Westminster's disc (*WEST-WL-5168) which couples the Liszt Second Concerto and features super-brilliant reproduction.

The Mendelssohn concerto is also available with the same composer's Second Concerto as a coupling (*D-DL-9652), performed by Roloff and Lehmann

and the Bamberg Symphony. You may, therefore, acquire the two Liszt concertos and the two Mendelssohn concertos on single LP's; or if you wish just one of each composer's concertos for your library, then the present Iturbi disc will fill the bill. S.

Handel: Concerto in G minor, Op. 4, No. 1. One side, and **Handel: Concerto in B-flat, Op. 4, No. 2.** Jeanne Demessieux (organ) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-L-695) \$5.95.

Those who would like to own a recording of one or two Handel organ concertos may have passed up the Vox albums released last year, for they each had six concertos on two LP's. We now have a single LP with a pair of concertos although they are quite different from the Vox series. Kraft, the organist for Vox, and his accompanying orchestra under Reinhart, have a bright, rippling, transparent style that is prevailingly light and gay. Even in the slow movements their texture is clear and cool, and throughout the works the organ is a small instrument of clarity rather than weight. In this new disc, we are back to the old idea of a large, rich-voiced instrument. Ansermet has a slower-paced, more introspective style of Handel interpretation, and the whole canvas results in something larger, richer, and in a sense more elegant than the Vox recordings. The only thing actually undesirable in the present set is the thickness of pedal passages in the tutti. Otherwise, we would say Demessieux and Ansermet offer a convincing account of their ideas about Handel. We think Kraft and Reinhart provide a more accurate picture of how these concertos should sound, mainly because they have a lighter and less ponderous touch, and these works are generally conceded to be a light form of entertainment rather than a heavy study of any kind. One hesitates to criticize too sharply the work of Demessieux and Ansermet; Demessieux plays admirably and often with sensitive beauty in the slow movements as well as accuracy in the faster ones. And Ansermet prepares the orchestral part with care and beautiful finish; neither of them is guilty of sentimentalizing the music. You may find this treatment much to your taste and completely enjoyable; we think Kraft and Reinhart have a better idea in the light, clear, breezy style of their sets. S.

Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and **Liszt: Concerto No. 2 in A.** Edith Farnadi (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5168) \$5.95.

Eschewing the gaudiness usually associated with these concerti (but not necessarily a part of them) Dr. Scherchen produces a performance which is sensational only in the degree of taste it exhibits—a conductor's performance throughout, the piano and pianist being relegated to the positions they prop-

erly deserve. This record, therefore, should appeal more to the musically sophisticated than to the novice. The idea of combining both concerti on one disc, which is original with Westminster, is a minor but significant indication of their musical intelligence.

Bach: Concerto No. 3 in D. One side, and **Bach: Concerto No. 4 in A.** Kurt Rapf (harpsichord) with the Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Kurt Rapf. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-509) \$5.95.

Bach: Concerto No. 3 in D. One side, and **Bach: Concerto No. 6 in F.** Maria van der Lyck (harpsichord) with the Stuttgart Ton-Studio Orchestra conducted by Hans Michael. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-547) \$5.95.

Except that there seems to be a slightly better balance between the harpsichord and the orchestra on the Bach Guild recording (*BG-BG-509) than on the Period disc (*PE-SPLP-547), there is little to choose between them. It is pretty much a matter of which coupling you will prefer. Reproduction on both records is excellent and the soloists in both cases are highly capable artists.

Haydn: Concerto in D, Op. 101. Enrico Mainardi (violoncello) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7536) \$3.85.

Gluck: Concerto in G for Flute and Orchestra. Jean Pierre Rampall (flute) with the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. One side, and **Corelli: Concerto for Oboe and Strings.** Pierre Pierlot (oboe) with the Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by René Leibowitz. And **Haydn: "Toy" Symphony in C.** Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-29) \$5.95.

Enrico Mainardi (with his singing cello) wades through the buckets of tears he apparently conceives the Haydn Concerto to be. To have gotten through the whole work while suffering so greatly the romantic agony is indeed a great tribute to his unoppressed spirit. Of course the fact that his tempi are mostly wrong and his phrasing imprecise is overshadowed by the nobility evinced.

Whoever coupled the works on the Oceanic disc had as much a sense of humor as a sense of music. The Gluck Concerto is strictly rococco fluff. The Corelli work is largely stolen from Handel (but quite well stolen). And if you don't know the Toy Symphony, among other things it has three birds in it.

Glière: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra. Dulova (harp) with the National Radio Orchestra conducted by Gauk. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Symphony No. 3 in C, Op. 32.** National Radio Orchestra conducted by Gauk. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-567) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under ORCHESTRA.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Piston: Quintet for Piano and Strings. Earl Wild (piano) with Walden String Quartet. One side, and **Martinu: Quartet No. 6.** Walden String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-14) \$5.95.

Piston: Sonata for Violin and Piano. One side, and **Lopatnikoff: Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano. Op. 32.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9541) \$5.85.

For those interested in music in the modern idiom these two LP discs will be of particular appeal. The three composers represented are all now living in the United States. Walter Piston is American born; Martinu was born in Czechoslovakia and came to this country in 1941; and Lopatnikoff claims Russia as his native land and arrived in New York in 1939, after an extended stay in Germany.

All of the works found on this pair of discs must be approached with a sympathy for the modern idiom, or at least a desire to expose oneself to it without prejudice. This is not the sort of music that one can grasp in a moment—repeated hearings are necessary before one can begin to appreciate it. For those who would like to investigate the type of music that these three important modern composers are writing, the opportunity is at hand via these splendid recordings by artists who are ideally suited to the task they have set for themselves—not an easy task by any means; for while this music may not sound particularly difficult, we can assure you that it is.

CHORAL



Bruckner: Mass No. 3 in F minor ("Great"). Dorothea Siebert (soprano), Dagmar Herrmann (alto), Erich Majkut (tenor), Otto Wiener (bass), Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Ferdinand Grossman. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7940) \$5.95.

Janáček: Slavonic Mass ("Msa glagolskaja"). Moravian Mixed Chorus and Brno Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Břetislav Bakala, with František Michálek (organ). 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7072) \$5.95.

"The three Masses—in D Minor, F Minor and E Minor—and the *Te Deum*, are the peak of Bruckner's sacred compositions. Here not only does his own individual religious feeling display itself but the fundamental idea of the source—Christ's sacrifice for humanity—is felt through music of high and illustrative inspiration." Thus writes Dr. Werner Wolff in his excellent biography and criticism of Anton Bruckner. These words sum up, most succinctly, the essence of the "rustic genius" who wrote such monumental and architectural music. The writing of settings for the Mass came easier to Bruckner,

and there is none of the striving for expression one senses throughout the nine symphonies. Dr. Grossman and his forces give a rousing performance of this great work. The soloists, it is true, are at times something less than adequate, but the over all effect is not diminished by these evidences of human weakness.

So different as to be actually startling is the almost barbaric *Msa glagolskaja* by Leos Janáček (1854-1928). This work had its first performance at Brno in 1928 shortly after Janáček's death and was introduced to this country at a concert by Bodansky in 1930. At that time it was emphasized that the piece was not, except in form, a mass of the Church—Janáček himself did not intend it for performance in church. It is a subjective work from start to finish. The melodies are not too involved, rather straightforward, but the harmonies are; and they often swallow up the tunes. The performance here, by the chorus and orchestra of the composer's own city of Brno may be considered authentic. Certainly it is a robust one, full of dramatic dynamic contrasts and tempestuous vitality. Technically the disc rates with the best recording of today. Excellent notes and the text are supplied.

W.



OPERA

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Margaret Harshaw, Mildred Miller (sopranos); Richard Tucker (tenor); Thelma Votipka (mezzo-soprano); Frank Guarerra (baritone); Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. Three sides, and **Leoncavallo: Pagliacci** (complete.) (Sung in Italian). (TNR Oct. '51). Lucine Amara soprano; Richard Tucker, Thomas Hayward tenors; Giuseppe Valdengo, Clifford Harvuo baritones. Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-124) \$17.85.

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Margaret Harshaw, Mildred Miller (sopranos); Richard Tucker (tenor); Thelma Votipka (mezzo-soprano); Frank Guarerra (baritone); Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. Three sides, and **Verdi: La Forza del Destino**—Overture. And **Verdi: La Traviata**—Preludes to Acts I & III. And **Verdi: I Vespri Siciliani**—Overture. Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Fausto Cleva. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-123) \$12.11.

This is the fourth *Cavalleria Rusticana* on LP; the previous ones on RCA Victor (Gigli at the prow and Mascagni at the helm) (TNR Mar. '53) and Cetra (TNR Dec. '51) were both (this reviewer has not heard the Remington) eminently acceptable performances of this very popular opera and the

advent of the Metropolitan Opera Association performance was viewed rather dimly.

The cast is assembled from among the best singers on the company's roster and, by and large they do a good job. Richard Tucker, as Turridu sings in stentorian tones, accurate pitch and the absolute minimum of expression. His opening *siciliano* lacks the required sensuousness and the closing aria, *Mama, quel vino è generoso*, has little of the fire and desperation inherent in the situation and music. Margaret Harshaw, as the unfortunate Santuzza, sings well enough but is only a little more successful than Tucker insofar as any real characterization is concerned. The well known *Voi lo sapete* is delivered with good style and considerable vocal opulence—nothing more. The duet that follows is passably done but like so many Anglo-Saxon performances of passionate music, the singing is over-refined. Frank Guarerra, as Alfio, fails to impress.

The orchestra and chorus do yeoman work and, on the whole, turn in the best performances of all. Cleva's direction here, as elsewhere, strikes this reviewer as pedestrian and lacking in distinction which is the set's chief weakness. The recording is uniformly good; this is, technically at least, the best *Cavalleria Rusticana* on discs.

Columbia has thoughtfully packaged the new release in two ways. One couples it with the previously issued *I Pagliacci*, while for those who have *Pagliacci*, it is issued alone, with the fourth side devoted to the sparklingly recorded but dully played Verdi excerpts listed above.

W.

Wolf-Ferrari: I Quattro Rusteghi ("School for Fathers") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Gianna Perea Labia, Alda Noni, Ester Orell (sopranos); Agnese Dubbini (mezzo-soprano); Mario Carlin, Manfredi Ponz de Leon (tenors); Carlo Ulivi (baritone); Fernando Corena, Pasquale Lombardo, Cristiano Dalamangas (bassos); Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Alfredo Simonetto. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1239) \$17.85.

A real curiosity is Wolf-Ferrari's delightful opera-buffa *I Quattro Rusteghi*. This sparkling comedy has had a checkered history. It was first produced in Germany (Munich) in 1906; the first Italian performance was in 1914 (Milan) but the American première did not take place until October 1951 when it was mounted by the New York City Opera Company. On this latter occasion it was received with critical acclaim, being pronounced a "masterful score—in every way charming" (Virgil Thompson) and "a delectable little bon-bon of a comic opera" (Olin Downes).

For this recorded production Cetra engaged the services of some of the best Italian singers available. Fernando Corena brings to the role of Lunardo his usual understanding and intelligence along with his fine voice. Alda Noni, as Marina, gives a genuinely fine and musicianly interpretation of the kindly aunt. Vocally, she lives up to the high standards she has

set in previous recordings. Mario Carlin is a tenor new to records, and he sings the role of Filipeto with taste and assurance. There are many others in the very long cast; most of them are excellent but lack of space precludes more than a brief mention of those who are outstanding. Crisiano Dalamangas as the merchant Cancian is superb, and Ester Orell, as his wife Felice, also merits praise.

Alfredo Simonetto directs a performance notable for its genuinely musical qualities. He has obviously taken considerable pains with the production with the usual result—a performance that charms and convinces. Naturally, the music is neither profound nor, to be honest, really great. Wolf-Ferrari's avowed intention as a composer was to make people happy, to provide enjoyment "for all who can not create (it) for themselves." In this necessarily limited field *I Quattro Rusteghi* may be considered an unqualified success. The usual Cetra excellence prevails as regards libretto, notes and recording. W.

Bellini: La Sonnambula (complete). (Sung in Italian). Lina Pagliughi, Wanda Ruggeri (sopranos); Ferruccio Tagliavini, Armando Benzi (tenors); Annamaria Anelli (mezzo-soprano); Cesare Siepi, Piero Poldi (bassos); Chorus of CETRA; Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Franco Capuana. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-LP-1240) \$17.85.

Bellini's first popular success, *La Sonnambula*, has finally reached the recording studios and emerges as a solid, if not overly inspired, opera. Now it is entirely possible that the singers, while ostensibly of a high degree of competence, do not have the proper schooling in the style required for a superior performance, for this reviewer finds it hard to understand, from these records, the reasons for the immense popularity the work enjoyed in past years. The plot is light, the music matches it, and, apart from the numerous opportunities for *bel canto*, some coloratura acrobatics and a few sweet melodies, the piece has little to recommend it.

From the foregoing it can be deduced that *La Sonnambula* is strictly a singer's opera; so let us examine the singers. Lina Pagliughi, once one of Italy's foremost coloraturas, essays the role of Amina, a role, incidentally, sung by all the great sopranos from the fabulous Guidetta Pasta (the original Amina) down to Galli-Curci. She is moderately successful. Miss Pagliughi has two principal arias, both in the last act, and these are sung very sweetly; but the bloom is definitely off her once glorious voice. In former times the high notes were as steady as could be, but now they have more than a tendency to waver. This deficiency is covered up in the rapid passages, and the florid music is tossed off with consummate ease. Ferruccio Tagliavini is a wooden, rather undistinguished Elvino. This may be the fault of the libretto but one cannot escape the feeling he should have been able to do something

about it. Siepi is also strictly two-dimensional as Rodolfo, singing the beautiful *Vi ravviso a luoghi ameni* perfectly but with virtually no expression.

Chorus and orchestra under Maestro Capuana (an excellent conductor, by the way) do yeoman work; yet the opera does not really come alive. Maybe one was expecting too much. In all events, *La Sonnambula* is available and those interested are advised to proceed with caution. Hear this one first. W.

Mozart Bass Arias. Fernando Corena (bass) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" discs (*L-LS-671) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Don Giovanni*—Madamina, il catalogo; *Don Giovanni*—Ah! Pieta, signori miei; *Nozze di Figaro*—Tutto e disposto; *Nozze di Figaro*—Non piu andrai; *Nozze di Figaro*—Se vuol ballare; *Nozze di Figaro*—La vendetta; *Zauberflöte*—In diesen heil'gen Hallen; *Cosi fan Tutte*—Donne mie, la fate a tanti.

Famous Operatic Excerpts. Fernando Corena (bass) and Aldo Protti (baritone) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Alberto Erede. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-701) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Elisir d'Amore*—Udite, udite, o rustici; *Don Pasquale*—Ah! un foco insolito; *La Gazza Ladra*—Il mio piano e preparato (Corena). *Trovatore*—Il balen del suo sorriso; *Pagliacci*—Prologue; *Barbiere di Siviglia*—Largo al factotum (Protti).

Fernando Corena is rapidly building up a sound (no pun intended) reputation in this country via his many excellent operatic performances on records. He adds considerably to his stature with the first of these two discs. It so often happens that a singer, gifted in many ways, falls flat on his face, as it were, when attempting Mozart. Thus it is very gratifying to find Corena singing Figaro, Leoprello and Don Alfonso with excellent style and musicianship. He wisely does not attempt *Don Giovanni* but does an amazing job with Sarastro's *In diesen heil'gen Hallen* and in German, too. The disc represents a considerable feat both vocally (Corena has a superb basso cantante that is beautifully produced and handled) and interpretively. He needs bow to no one with these performances although in all honesty one must admit that there are others equally good.

The second disc, of which Corena has only one side, is notable for an example from Rossini's almost forgotten opera *La Gazza Ladra* that is not only delightful music but also an impressive performance. The wonderful *Udite, udite o rustici* (sung here without the choral passages) is another superlative effort. Least interesting, although only by comparison, is the *Don Pasquale* excerpt.

After the foregoing music it comes as a sort of slap in the face to hear three of the more hackneyed operatic excerpts sung in what must be described

as routine fashion by an able baritone, Aldo Protti. Sgr. Protti has a somewhat throaty but pleasing voice that is not exceptional in any way and has interpretive abilities and musical taste of the same calibre. For example, he is unable to resist the urge to be "cute" and thus fouls up the detail in the *Barbiere* aria. A stronger pairing than this could be imagined without too much difficulty.

Adequate recording and somewhat less than satisfactory notes are supplied. W.

X Boito: Mefistofele (complete). (Sung in Italian). Rosetta Noli (soprano), Gianni Poggi (tenor), Giulio Neri (basso), supporting soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Opera di Milano conducted by Franco Capuana. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-230) \$18.50.

Boito's only surviving opera, *Mefistofele*, receives a stunning first LP performance on this new Urania set. For a work that has been maligned as much as this, it comes as a very pleasant surprise to hear a work that abounds in lyric melodies, has living characters and a libretto that not only makes sense but that also contains more than a modicum of the philosophy of the original play.

When first produced in 1861, *Mefistofele* was a failure due to its inordinate length. Boito very sensibly withdrew the work and pruned it to a more reasonable duration; seven years later it was presented with great success. The piece follows the story of Goethe's great play in considerable detail, including both "Sabbaths." Boito's characters are, to a great extent, all three-dimensional; they are real. Ernest Newman once wrote that the only operatic devil that carried any conviction was Berlioz—but when he wrote those lines he had not heard Giulio Neri in *Mefistofele*, although much of the realism and strength of the role is inherent in the music.

One has nothing but praise for the sterling cast of singers Urania cornered for this recording. Neri, in the title role, sings magnificently. He has a rare understanding of the part and is uniformly successful. The arias *Ecco il mondo* and *Son lo spirto che nega* will stand comparison with the greatest. Gianni Poggi surprises as Faust. He sings throughout with excellent taste, with good expression and in a smooth tenor that is most agreeable. Rosetta Noli is a newcomer to records and her Margherita is notable for its fresh, youthful manner that is as becoming as it is rare. Her work in the half hysterical Garden Scene, as well as in the moving Prison Scene, go a long way towards making the performance as successful as it is. Others in the long cast, notably Simone dall'Argine as Helen of Troy, sing well and with conviction.

Maestro Capuana does a thoroughly musically job with the complex music. He is, in fact, a conductor to be reckoned with, for throughout the long score he never relaxes his firm grip, (both on the

singers and orchestra) and the results speak for themselves. A good libretto, notes, and technically superior recording complete this extraordinarily fine operatic issue. W.

Stravinsky: Oedipus Rex. (Sung in Latin). Martha Mödl (mezzo-soprano); Peter Pears, Helmut Krebs (tenors); Heinz Rehfuss (baritone); Otto von Rohr (bass); Cologne Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Igor Stravinsky, with Jean Cocteau (narrator). 1-12" disc (*CML-4644) \$5.45.

It was back in the glamorous Twenties (in 1925 to be exact) that Igor Stravinsky had the idea of writing a large scale work on a Latin text. He decided on Sophocles' tragedy *Oedipus Rex* and then asked Jean Cocteau to collaborate with him. M. Cocteau "telescoped" the original Greek play into six episodes, and the entire text was re-written into Latin. The piece is subtitled an "opéra-oratorio" and, as the term indicates, is a fusion of both disparate forms. The various choruses and arias partake of the oratorio style, perhaps, more than opera; but a genuine attempt has been made to combine the two—not always successfully.

The recording, under the composer's direction and with Cocteau as Narrator may be considered definitive. The soloists, while far from being the best singers available, are well versed in the idiom and, apart from some ineffectual tenor singing by Pears, do pretty well. The chorus and the orchestra bear the brunt of the burden and both acquit themselves creditably.

Musically, one must confess to being unimpressed by all the sound and fury. The nature of *Oedipus Rex* (and for that matter nearly all of Stravinsky's music) has been accurately analyzed by the late Constant Lambert, who wrote "*Oedipus Rex* may differ in outward shape (from previous compositions) but the mentality behind these fabrications remains the same. They are not so much music as renowned impersonations of music. *Oedipus* has all the paraphernalia of tragedy, and the only thing wrong with it is the complete lack of any genuine pity or genuine terror. . . ."

Columbia has achieved a good technical job of recording, but to issue such a work as this, French narration and Latin text, without a complete libretto is the height of something or other—it will certainly be unintelligible to many who might otherwise be interested. As a first recording of an historical work, then, this release will have a certain interest, but will this interest last? W.

Ravel: L'Heure Espagnole (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists and l'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7880) \$5.95.

L'Heure Espagnole, a delightful one act opera by Ravel, was first produced at the Paris Opéra-

Comique on 19 May 1911. It has, according to Ernest Newman, "one of the finest libretti ever written." And, in truth, the story is a delightful one; but since Vox subscribes to the theory that the words of an opera are of no interest, no opportunity is given the buyer to check on Newman's statement nor follow the opera, for no text is supplied with the record.

The cast is drawn from excellent French singers, many of whom are becoming well known in this country via their recordings. Janine Linda is an above average light soprano who makes a very pleasing *Concécpcion*. Her husband, Torquemada (such a name for the old clock maker!) is sung, if the expression is the proper one, by Jean Mollien. This role calls for a tenor, but a special kind, known as Trial, after the famous 18th century singer Antoine Trial who sang in a high somewhat thin and nasal voice. M. Mollien does his best. As Gonsalve, the poet, André Dran is in good voice and fine spirits and so turns in a good performance. The hero, if there is one, is Ramiro, the muleteer, and is sung by Jean Hoffman. Here again, a special voice is called for—a baritone-Martin. Jean Blaise Martin was a well-known French baritone, noted for a voice which was almost a tenor in its upper range and a bass in its lower. This is quite an order and Hoffman, while not entirely equal to the task (who would be nowadays?) is, in all events, obliging. Lucian Mans as Don Inigo Gomez (basso buffa) is excellent.

Much of the charm of the piece lies in the orchestra where Ravel's undoubtedly genius is apparent in every note. René Leibowitz, who seems to have no limitations either as to understanding or style, directs a performance that has wit and interest. While *L'Heure Espagnole* will not please every taste, it is decidedly worth investigation. Superb recording is in evidence and, as mentioned above, if a libretto had been included, the release would have been a noteworthy one. W.

Glinka: A Life for the Czar (complete). (Sung in Russian). Tanya Shpieler (soprano); Elena Antonova (alto); Georg Nelepp, Ivan Skobtsov (tenors); Maxim Mikhailov, Serge Khossov, Serge Svetlanov (bassos); Chorus and Orchestra of the Bolshoi Opera conducted by Alexander Melik-Pashaiev. 3-12" discs in album (*VAN-VRS-6010/2) \$18.50.

Mikhail Glinka, often referred to as the "Father of Russian Music" has usually been represented on records and concert programs in this country almost solely by the sparkling overture to *Russlan and Ludmilla*. One has read a lot about other operatic works, especially *A Life for the Czar*, but opportunities to hear them have seldom materialized. Thus a debt of gratitude is due Vanguard for making available a production of this landmark of Russian operatic literature.

A Life for the Czar was written during the period 1834-36 and the first performance took place, amid scenes of great enthusiasm, at St. Petersburg in November of 1836. The story is laid in the 17th century and concerns the heroism of the peasant Ivan Sussanin during the Russo-Polish wars, a date alternatively given as 1612 and 1633. Musically speaking Glinka, although he never succeeded in freeing himself from Western musical influences, was one of the first of the Russian composers to cultivate a melodic style based on national folk songs and dances. He also developed a "harmonic and orchestral treatment not only admirably suited to them and unmistakably Russian," writes Cecil Gray, "but also highly original at the same time."

These qualities are apparent in *A Life for the Czar* and this performance, while not notable for excellent singing (although, as is so often the case, none of participants are really bad), it does have an aura of authenticity about it. The principal role, that of the peasant Ivan Sussanin, is sung with considerable fervor by Maxim Mikhailov, a moderately gifted basso. The part of Antonida, his daughter, is sung by Tanya Shpieler, who scoops and wobbles her way around high notes and transmits her obvious discomfiture to the listener. Others in the long cast are of varying degrees of competence.

Chief interest in this work, as is true of so many of the little known and unusual works that are being recorded nowadays, lies in its newness, its unfamiliarity—how it will wear is a big question mark. This one, what with the uneven singing and the relatively poor recorded quality (despite the obviously carefully edited tapes) did not appeal overmuch to this reviewer. The English text only has been supplied as a libretto.

W.

VOCAL

Mozart Concert Arias. Magda Laszlo (soprano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Argeo Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5179) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Ah, lo previdi!*, K. 272; *Chi sa, chi sa, qual sia*, K. 582; *Vado, ma dove?*, K. 583; *Ch'io mi scordi di te?*, K. 505; *Bella mia fiamma*, K. 528.

Records by Magda Laszlo are always an occasion for rejoicing; and when, as in this case, the composer is Mozart, the treat promises to be a rare one indeed. Nor is this disc a disappointment—on the contrary all one's expectations are fulfilled and, in several instances, surpassed.

Miss Laszlo begins with an early work (K. 272), the text of which was taken from an opera by Paisiello, a common practice in those days. What is uncommon about this work is that it was not written as an exercise or for interpolation into someone else's opera. It was written for concert use, specifically for Josefa Duscheck. The next two arias, while written



late in Mozart's life, revert to an earlier practice and are intended for use in operas composed by other musicians, in this instance a long forgotten piece by Vincente Martin. Musically they are of a high order and of formidable technical difficulty. The prize of the collection is the aria *Ch'io mi scordi di te*, which is, in reality, a duet for piano and soprano with orchestral accompaniment. It is one of Mozart's most personal and consequently greatest works. The aria was written for Nancy Storace, the Susanna of the original production of *Le Nozze di Figaro*. The last work, K. 528, dates from 1787 thus placing it at the time of the Prague performances of *Don Giovanni*. This, like the first aria on the record, was also written for Josefa Duscheck and was reportedly to show off her voice. Certainly it is a piece requiring the utmost in technique and yet remains good music.

Magda Laszlo sings all this wonderful music in superb style. Vocally, of course, she is always capable and sure. The technical difficulties are surmounted with deceptive ease. What is equally important is her ability to project the mood—to underscore the meaning of the words with expression, to color the phrases and make them communicative. In this she is aided by Quadri's exceptionally sensitive direction and Westminster's crystal clear recording. As is usual with this fine company, the notes set a high standard and the complete texts of the arias are supplied. A must for all Mozarteans! W.

Brahms: Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52. One side, and **Brahms: German Folk Songs.** (Sung in English). Roger Wagner Chorale directed by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8176) \$4.98.

Brahms: Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 52. One side, and **Brahms: Neue Liebeslieder Waltzes, Op. 65.** (Sung in German). Erna Hassler (soprano), Hetty Plümacher (alto), Albert Weikenmeier (tenor), Franz Kelch (bass) with Hans Michael and Hans Priegnitz (pianos). 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-28) \$5.95.

Here we have a choice of Brahms' *Liebeslieder Waltzes*, Op. 52 sung by a small chorus in English or as originally written for mixed quartet in German. One cannot compare these two versions as they sound so entirely different. For those who are familiar with these lovely songs to hear them sung in English will doubtless sound a bit strange. One will have to decide for himself whether he likes them that way or not . . . The Capitol disc also contains some German folk songs selected from a collection which Brahms had published in two volumes without opus numbers. On the reverse side of the Oceanic disc is a second set of *Liebeslieder* which appeared six years after the first group. These are entirely different from the earlier pieces and have never gained the popularity of the first set. This is probably because, while the first songs abound with the joy and rapture of youthful love, the second group is

made of sterner stuff and lack the delightful spontaneity that characterizes the earlier ones.

Bernstein: Wonderful Town. Rosalind Russell with members of the Original New York Production. 7-10" discs in album (D-DA-937) \$6.98. 6-7" discs in box (D-9-391) \$5.69. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9010) \$5.85.

Rodgers: On Your Toes. Portia Nelson, Jack Cassidy, supporting soloists with chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4645) \$5.45.

This month Decca offers the present Broadway smash hit, *Wonderful Town*, recorded by the members of the original cast headed by Rosalind Russell; and Columbia presents another of its recorded productions of smash hits of another period, *On Your Toes*, which made its bow on the Great White Way in 1936. Thus those who are interested in popular "Musicals" have an opportunity of comparing what was the rage in the thirties and what appeals to the theatre going public of today. Rodgers and Hart's *On Your Toes* certainly seems to wear very well—its big song hits "There's a Small Hotel" and "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue" seem just as fresh and sparkling today as when we first heard them nearly twenty years ago. We doubt that Leonard Bernstein's ditties will last as long. However, *Wonderful Town* is a play of action and doubtless those who have seen it can add the action in their imaginations to the music on the record and really get a great kick out the present recording. For those who have not seen the show we are rather afraid that the recorded version will seem somewhat lacking in appeal.

Seven Centuries of Sacred Music. Yves Tinayre (tenor) with instrumental and choral ensemble. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-120) \$11.70.

A number of years ago Lumen in France issued a set of records called "Seven Centuries of Sacred Music." This item has not been available on the American market for many years and so this re-issue by Decca is a very welcome one. We might mention that Decca has done an excellent job in transferring these 78 rpm recordings to these LP discs and has added some selections that were not in the original set.

The period covered by these recordings is the 12th to the 18th centuries both inclusive. Very intelligent notes are included in which each selection is described and the words of the original text are given with an English translation. These records, with their copious notes, might very well be used as an outline for a course of study of the sacred music of this period. Much more might be written about these unique recordings if space were available. We hope that we have indicated their value sufficiently to entice those interested to investigate this unusual set of discs.

PIANO



Beethoven: (33) *Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli*, Op. 120. Three sides, and **Beethoven:** (15) *Variations in E-flat, Op. 35 ("Eroica")*. Claudio Arrau (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-122) \$11.70.

Beethoven: *Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier")*. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-602) \$5.95.

Few people would disagree that Claudio Arrau is one of the half dozen most excellent living pianists—and his current offering of these sets of variations should certainly serve to further sustain that opinion. His technical capabilities are wholly beyond adverse criticism, and his musicianship is fundamentally sound, being open to objection only in its slightest details. Phonographically, he is the first pianist since Schnabel to have projected successfully the scope of the Diabelli Variations, referred to by Sir Donald Francis Tovey as the greatest of all variations (and that remarkably certain gentleman, neglecting Bach's Goldberg Variations, if not quite accurate, miscalculated by only one figure). Arrau avoids the metronomic type of pedantry which permeates the recent Horszowski recording and conceives simultaneously the fullest technical implications of the work with the *idée fixé* of joy through despair which Beethoven infused into his largest scores. The earlier Eroica Variations are performed with the same excellence: both, therefore, being done in a manner to which we think Beethoven would have consented.

Backhaus ambles leisurely through the "Hammerklavier" Sonata producing the effect that during the recording he did not wish to be disturbed by the piano. The aesthetic principles he employs, those of the deepest German Romanticism, though finding fulfilment in a consistent and well thought out performance, are hopelessly unsuited to the music. C.

Franck: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue. One side, and **Franck: Prelude, Aria and Finale.** Joerg Demus (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5163) \$5.95.

Franck: Prelude, Chorale and Fugue. One side, and **Chopin: Sonata No. 2 in B-flat minor, Op. 35.** Witold Malcuzynski (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3031) \$3.08.

Of the two recordings of Franck's famous *Prelude, Chorale and Fugue*, we prefer the Demus version. Whether it is worth the considerable difference in price is something that each music lover must decide for himself.

DICTION



Readings and Dramatic Presentations. Canada Lee (reading) with Don Morrow (narrator). 1-12" disc (*LIONEL-PT-1/2) \$5.95.

This disc was produced and issued as a tribute

to, and in memory of, the great Negro actor, Canada Lee. It contains among other things the eulogy of Oscar Hammerstein II which was delivered at his funeral services. It also contains some readings by Mr. Lee and a number of scenes from various plays in which he was featured, including: *Native Son*; *The Tempest*; and *Othello*. These various recorded excerpts are tied together with an appropriate commentary by Don Morrow. This disc is for those who would like to keep green in their memories a great artist who has gone on to his reward.

Readings by Sterling Brown and Langston Hughes. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-FP-90) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Break of Day; Sharecropper; Slim in Hell; Old Lem; Old King Cotton; Putting on Dog (Brown). Feet Live Their Own Lives; Simple Prays a Prayer; Wooing the Muse; Landladies* (all from "Simple Speaks his Mind") (Hughes).

This LP disc contains some poems by Sterling Brown, read by the author; and on the reverse side Langston Hughes reads some interesting excerpts from his book "Simple Speaks his Mind." Those interested in the work of these Negro writers will find these selections very satisfactorily recorded.

MISCELLANEOUS



Caribbean Dances. Music of Martinique, Virgin Islands, Guadeloupe, Trinidad, Antigua, Curacao recorded by Walter and Lisa Lekis. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-840) \$4.45.

Songs and Dances of Haiti. Recorded in Haiti by Harold Courlander. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-432) \$5.95.

Folk Music of Yugoslavia. Recorded in Yugoslavia by Laura Boulton. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-434) \$5.95.

Black Caribs of Honduras. Recorded in Honduras by Doris Stone. 1-12" disc (*FOLK-P-435) \$5.95.

Folk Music of the Mediterranean. Music of Algeria, Sardinia, Albania, Syria, France, Egypt, Morocco, Italy, Tunis, Greece, Turkey, Spain, Serbia, Libya, Palestine. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLK-P-501) \$11.90.

Music of the World's Peoples (Vol. 2). Music of Serbia, Iran, Albania, Congo, China, Finland, French Canada, Ukraine, Chile, Italy, Kashmir, Sioux, Jewish, Australia, Cuba, Azerbaijan. 2-12" discs in folder (*FOLK-P-505) \$11.90.

African Tribal Music and Dances. Sonar Senghor and his Troupe. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-513) \$5.95.

Devotees of folk and ethnic music will welcome the release of the six new issues of the Ethnic Folkways Library listed above. Nicely illustrated booklets accompany each set, fully explaining the music contained thereon.

Special note should be made of the African Tribal Music disc, for, while this is evidently authentic music, Sonar Senghor and his Troupe are primarily entertainers who have toured extensively in Europe and who will shortly make their U. S. debut. While we generally take a dim view of "popularized" folk music, we found this to be genuinely entertaining. Note to hi-fi fans: this is a wide range recording which may be used to demonstrate your equipment.

Aires Flamencos. Carlos Montoya (guitar). 1-12" disc (*MONTILLA-FM-LP-10). \$5.95.

In the April 1953 issue of *THE NEW RECORDS* we reviewed a Flamencan disc entitled "El Pili;" readers who were interested in that record will surely find the present disc of supreme fascination.

For the past ten years Montoya has been coming to the United States every year for a transcontinental concert tour. He has also appeared as soloist with the Rochester Symphony Orchestra under Iturbi. He is a master of his instrument, and with such a dearth of good Flamenco music presently available, we have no doubt that this disc will find a ready market—especially in view of the superb reproduction.

1, 2, 3 and a Zing Zing Zing. Street Games and Songs of the Children of New York City, recorded and edited by Tony Schwartz. 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-703) \$4.45.

Probably the best way to indicate what this record is all about is to quote Mr. Schwartz's introduction to his notes that accompany this recording:

"'1, 2, 3 and a Zing Zing Zing' grew out of a project I am working on, recording the folk expression of the community I live in. The material was recorded in an area two blocks wide and twenty blocks long, in West Midtown Manhattan, and is meant to be a sampling of what one might hear children doing in this community. These children were recorded during the summer and fall of 1952 while they were on the streets, sidewalks, stoops, playgrounds, basements, play centers, churches, homes and schools."

Inside Vienna. Wiener Konzertschrammeln Ensemble. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1026) \$4.

Those who know Vienna will recognize this music as that which may be heard during the summer coming from the gardens along the narrow streets of that city's wine-growing suburbs. In these gardens during the warm weather the Viennese love to spend their evenings sipping their wine and listening to this pleasant and tuneful music (Schrammelmusik). This music is usually performed, as it is on this disc, by a quartet of players whose instruments are: two violins, a contra-guitar and an accordian. It has been captured with rare fidelity on the present LP disc.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Coloseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

• indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address
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SEVERAL years ago WOR Feature Records issued a set of records (78 rpm) with which one might learn Spanish. The course was prepared by Frank Henius and was called "Quick Spanish Course." Twelve lessons were given on three 10-inch 78 rpm discs. These discs were contained in a substantial album with a 48-page book containing twelve exercises and twelve "Book Lessons."

A sample of this course was sent us when it was first published, but we did not review it because we felt that, while one might learn Spanish by means of this course, it would be much too difficult for the average person—especially a person who was not familiar with learning languages. We do not recall the original price of this course but we rather think that it was in the neighborhood of \$15.

Recently a number of these courses were offered to the publishers of this bulletin at a close-out price. We went over the course again very carefully, and it occurred to us that this course would be very useful to those high school or college students who were studying Spanish. It would be a marvelous help in improving their pronunciation of Spanish words by hearing them spoken on the records and also having them phonetically spelled in the "Book Lessons." It further occurred to us that this course would be ideal for those who would like to brush-up their Spanish—students who have had some knowledge of the language but have forgotten much of it through lack of use of it.

With this in mind the publishers of this bulletin bought these courses and are offering them to its readers at the very low price of \$2.95. While we do not suggest that this course will teach persons with no knowledge of the language to speak Spanish, we do feel that it is worth several times this low price to present students of the language or to those who have studied it previously and have forgotten much

that they once knew. Also those who are planning a trip to Spanish-speaking countries can surely get enough from the course to aid them considerably in their contacts with Spanish-speaking natives. Those interested should place their orders for the "Quick Spanish Course" promptly. Price \$2.95.

* * *

The London Gramophone Corporation has recently announced a 12-inch LP "Frequency Test Record." This disc is to be used for checking the frequency response of one's phonograph, and it fills a need of long standing.

The following constant tone frequencies are contained on this new record: 15,000 cycles per second; 14,000 cps; 13,000 cps; 12,000 cps; 11,000 cps; 10,000 cps; 9,000 cps; 8,000 cps; 7,000 cps; 6,000 cps; 5,000 cps; 4,000 cps; 3,000 cps; 2,000 cps; 1,000 cps; 500 cps; 250 cps; 125 cps; 60 cps; and 40 cps. These frequencies are separated by bands, so that any desired frequency may be selected at will. Both sides of this disc are exactly the same, each side containing the frequencies enumerated above; we presume that the user is to mark the side he starts with, and should he wear that side excessively, he can still use the reverse side.

Instructions for using the record, plus the sound levels (in decibels) for each frequency, are given on the jacket containing this LP disc; needless to say, the record may be used only at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm and only with a microgroove (.001") stylus.

If your local dealer cannot supply this record, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled. Record number *L-LL-738; price \$5.95.

* * *

It would seem that there is a not inconsiderable interest in recordings of early music, and to the uninitiated many of these items are dif-

sicult to find in the various LP catalogs. With this in mind, the publishers of THE NEW RECORDS have prepared a list of outstanding performances of works by composers who died before 1750 (e.g., Buxtehude, Carissimi, Frescobaldi, Josquin des Pres, Monteverdi, Palestrina, et al—but excluding J. S. Bach).

We have tried to make the list as inclusive as possible with the hope that it may be useful in helping the lover of early music to select additional records for his library. The list is available on request; simply ask for the List of Early Music Recordings and enclose a 3c stamp for return postage.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning June 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Bach: *Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor* and Bach: *Concerto in A minor*. One side, and Bach: (8) *Chorale-Preludes*. Carl Weinrich (organ). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3021) \$4.85. (TNR Aug. '52 & May '52).

Gershwin: *Porgy and Bess* (excerpts). Lawrence Winters, Camilla Williams, Inez Matthews, Avon Long, June McMechen, Eddie Matthews and Chorus and Orchestra—Engel. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-31) \$2.85. (TNR Oct. '51).

CONTENTS: *Summertime*; *A Woman Is a Sometime Thing*; *My Man's Gone Now*; *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'*; *Bess, You Is My Woman*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *Bess, Oh Where's My Bess?*; *There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York*.

Verdi: *Aida* (highlights). One side, and Gounod: *Faust* (highlights). Soloists and Orchestra of the New York City Opera Co.—Halasz. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3023) \$4.85. (TNR June '51).

Weber: *Der Freischütz* (highlights). Soloists, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra—Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-646) \$5.95. (TNR Aug. '51).

Puccini: *La Bohème* (highlights). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia—Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-649) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '52).

Puccini: *Madama Butterfly* (highlights). Soloists, Orchestra and Chorus of the Accademia di Santa Cecilia—Erede. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-650) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '52).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Sullivan: *The Mikado*—Overture. One side, and Sullivan: *H. M. S. Pinafore*—Overture. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Isidore Godfrey. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9007) \$2.95.

Weber: *Jubel-Ouvertüre* in E, Op. 59. One side, and Weber: *Peter Schmoll und sein Nachbarn*—Overture, Op. 8. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4054) \$2.50.

Weber: *Euryanthe*—Overture. One side, and Weber: *Preciosa* Overture and Weber: *Abu Hassan*—Overture. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4057) \$2.50.

Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*—Overture. One side, and Strauss: *Der Zigeunerbaron*—Overture. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4052) \$2.50.

Brahms: *Academic Festival Overture*, Op. 80 and Brahms: *Tragische Ouvertüre*, Op. 81. One side, Brahms: *Variations on a Theme of Haydn*, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Chorale"). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-735) \$5.95.

ORCHESTRA



Rimsky-Korsakov: *Scheherazade*. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 4-7" discs in box (*WDM-1732) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1732) \$5.72.

Scheherazade is a pictorial canvas that has a definite story and program, and no tone-poem has been subjected to more varied interpretations than this good old war horse. Besides being a field day for the conductor's imagination, it is also a marvelous exhibition piece for the virtuosity of a symphony orchestra. It goes without saying that Leopold Stokowski takes advantage of every opportunity to apply a striking interpretation to this music. It is one of the pieces which he has been known for many years to play in a sensational way; his old Philadelphia Orchestra set was cherished by many. This time he uses the renowned Philharmonia Orchestra of London, and is accorded reproduction of a sort that is new in English circles. Recorded in Kingsway Hall, it is a magnificent job mechanically, plenty of resonance, no blurring, and fine perspective and very faithful timbre. The loud passages emerge with ex-

ceptional clarity.

Our favorite recording for quite some time has been Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra (*C-ML-4089), and we do not intend to part with this disc. Between Ormandy and Stokowski there is indeed a world of difference. There are many sections which are totally different; different tempi, different lines brought out, a completely different approach. Generally speaking, Ormandy outplays Stokowski in the first movement. In the third movement, Stokowski achieves gossamer effects and a sensuous atmosphere, where Ormandy keeps things moving and uses larger masses of tone to depict the Young Prince and Young Princess. It is in the second and fourth movements that Stokowski dramatizes the music with a flair that must be heard to be believed. His conception of the stormy sea and the shipwreck is a masterpiece bordering on sound-effects rather than music.

If you take the time to compare Ormandy and Stokowski you will be amazed at how two conductors can arrive at two such entirely different results in the same score. Another recent *Scheherazade* by Dorati and the Minneapolis Orchestra (*ME-MG-50009) is well played and very well recorded, but is in the lightweight division compared to Ormandy and Stokowski. Monteux and Ansermet do not excite as do these other two, and the others who have LP discs are still further down the list. S.

Sibelius: Lemminkäinen Suite. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4672) \$5.45.

Sibelius: En Saga, Op. 9. One side, and **Sibelius: Tapiola, Op. 112.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-737) \$5.95.

Most persons by now have heard the beautiful tone-poem *The Swan of Tuonela*, which the Philadelphia Orchestra, among many others, has committed to records several times, and some have heard Lemminkäinen's *Homecoming*, also recorded several times. But the premiere of the complete work known as the *Lemminkäinen Suite* was given during the past year by Ormandy on the composer's 86th birthday, and Columbia has lost no time in offering a recording of it which presents the two sections previously unheard. These sections are titled *Lemminkäinen and the Maidens of Saari* and *Lemminkäinen in Tuonela*; they appear as the first and third sections, Swan is second and *Homecoming* is the fourth. The music was inspired by episodes of the *Kalevala*, a collection of Finnish legends. Sibelius' first idea had been to fashion an opera from these stories, but the opera project was abandoned and the four tone-poems were presented as such in 1896. Lemminkäinen is pronounced LEM-men-ki-EEN-nen, in case you are baffled by this odd name.

Ormandy and the Philadelphians plays this music with surpassing beauty. Ormandy has seen fit not to overplay it; the playing is relaxed and serene, with

a great deal of atmosphere and mood that seem most appropriate and descriptive. The two unfamiliar sections are interesting and characteristic, and with repeated hearings they might prove as palatable as Sibelius' more familiar scores. The reproduction is excellent.

Eduard van Beinum and the admirable Concertgebouw play a pair of Sibelius' works which make an ideal LP coupling. *En Saga*, an early work, employs much material from an Octet for clarinet, flute and strings; it has no story although there is a nationalistic feeling about it. *Tapiola*, written in 1925 on a commission from Walter Damrosch, is one of the composer's greatest scores, a mature expression of the deep poetic vision which first became evident in *En Saga*. Van Beinum does nobly with both pieces, even matching Beecham's LP of *Tapiola*. The Dutch conductor is in no hurry with this music and achieves some fine effects, all within a musically framework. The reproduction is good, rather thick in texture and with nice string tone. S.

Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 3 in A minor, Op.

44. Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra conducted by Nicholas Golovanov. 1-12" disc (*RACHMANINOFF SOCIETY RS-7) \$5.95.

Rachmaninoff composed the *Third Symphony* nearly thirty years after the *Second*, during his last, most soul-searching period. He had vowed the *Second* would be his last, but the composition of the *Third* is most easily explainable by the type of work it is. There is a completely different approach and style in the *Third*. It is clearly an effort at expanding his own horizons, and Rachmaninoff must be considered ambitious and progressive in his desire to write this symphony. Where the popular *Second* wallows around in typical romantic fields of composition, the *Third* is a more complex, enigmatic work, which has fewer formal and classical lines, and which is generally a really ambitious, and for Rachmaninoff, experimental work.

When Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra premiered the work in November 1936, the press was rather cool. If one knows the Philadelphia press in matters of musical criticism as we do, one would understand that; for our largest paper has had something less than a charitable attitude toward anything newer than Wagner, unless the newer work is completely conventional. Whether the unfavorable press militated against the popularity which this work might have enjoyed or whether it was not destined to capture the fancies of the American public is something we hate to try to explain, because in Russia the *Third* has become the most frequently performed of Rachmaninoff's purely orchestral works.

Nicholas Golovanov has been prominent as a conductor in Russia for the past twenty-five years. His performances of Rachmaninoff's music, and in particular his championing of the *Third Symphony*, have contributed much to its acceptance there. His belief in the work and experience with it are obvious

at once, for this is a magnificent performance which communicates enthusiasm in no uncertain terms. The reproduction is good, if not of today's best, in this first LP edition of the work. S.

Bartók: Dance Suite. One side, and **Bartók: (2) Portraits.** New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Franco Autori, with Jean Pougnet (violin).

1-12" disc (*BARTOK-BRS-304) \$5.95.

Bartók: Dance Suite. One side, and **Kodály: Dances from Galanta.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Georg Solti. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-709) \$5.95.

Bartók's *Dance Suite*, written for the fiftieth anniversary of the merger of Buda and Pest, is not one of his greatest compositions. (His truly great achievements were almost always in chamber music. The case is not that he was incapable of thinking greatly on a large scale, but that, like composers before the auditory obesity set in, he found the more restrained and economical media most suitable.) The work is, nevertheless, a well constructed suite on authentic Hungarian themes and finds an essentially perfect performance in Autori's hands. Under Solti's oppressive touch, however, there is only preposterous bombast.

The "Two Portraits" side of Autori's disc, too, is well executed, the first part being one of Bartók's most successful early works and in parts reminiscent of the unique opening fugue of Beethoven's C-sharp minor Quartet.

Solti's production of the Dances of Galanta lacks the taste and proportion of De Sabata's version (*D-DL-9518).

Gould: Latin-American Symphonette. One side, and **Barber: Overture to "The School for Scandal," Op. 5** and **Barber: Adagio for Strings** (from "String Quartet, Op. 11"). And **Barber: Essay for Orchestra No. 1, Op. 12.** Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40002) \$5.45.

This interesting disc contains the works of two American composers of about the same age. Samuel Barber was born in 1910 and Morton Gould in 1913. Gould, despite his thorough classical musical training, has specialized in the more popular idiom of the musical theatre of the present day. His *Latin-American Symphonette* in four movements is based on four dance rhythms from south of the border. It is largely percussive in character and should appeal to those who enjoy ballet music with a Latin-American tang. . . . Barber's Overture to *The School for Scandal* was his "graduation thesis" from Curtis Institute in 1932. It has met with great success and has appeared quite often on programs of important symphony orchestras. His *Adagio for Strings* was originally a movement from a string quartet, and in its present form for full string orchestra it was first performed by Toscanini and the NBC

Symphony during a broadcast in 1938. On this same program was Barber's *Essay for Orchestra No. 1, Op. 12*, which is also included on the present disc. Both of these latter pieces have caught on very well with symphony orchestra audiences, and whenever they appear on programs they are greeted with much enthusiasm. Previous recordings of them have enjoyed quite large sales. At the hands of Howard Hanson, who is most sympathetic to modern American music, the works of these two composers has been performed most felicitously. We feel that Messrs. Barber and Gould should be very happy to have had Mr. Hanson record their works. Mercury has supplied superb reproduction.

R. Strauss: An Alpine Symphony, Op. 64. Munich State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Konwitschny. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7064) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Ein Heldenleben, Op. 40. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Clemens Krauss. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-659) \$5.95.

R. Strauss: Don Juan, Op. 20. One side, and **R. Strauss: Tod und Verklärung, Op. 24.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4650) \$5.45.

Of particular interest is *An Alpine Symphony*, Op. 64—this is the first time that this work has appeared in a domestic catalog. The reason for this is, we understand, that there are certainly copyright restrictions on this particular Strauss opus that, up until this time, have made it impractical for domestic publishers to issue recordings of it. We note that the present disc carries a special label stating that public performances and broadcasts of this recording are strictly prohibited. *An Alpine Symphony*, a descriptive work in one movement, is certainly one of Strauss' lesser compositions and has never proved popular with American audiences; however, a collection of Strauss recordings is not complete without it, and as the present recording is an excellent one it fills a long vacant stop in the repertory of recorded music. . . . The other three Strauss works are already well represented in the present LP catalog. The famous Mengelberg recording of *Ein Heldenleben* probably heads the list of recordings of that outstanding tone poem. As for *Don Juan* and *Tod und Verklärung* we would say that the present Walter versions rate with the best of the available recordings of these well-known Strauss works. We suggest that you listen to Furtwängler's performance of *Tod und Verklärung* and Toscanini's *Don Juan* before you make your choice.

Corelli: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 6 (complete). Corelli Tri-Centenary String Orchestra conducted by Dean Eckertsen. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7893) \$17.85.

The idea of recording completely the *Concerti Grossi*, Op. 6, of Corelli, his masterpiece, was an

excellent one. It is therefore unfortunate that the Corelli Tri-Centenary String Orchestra could not have presented a more faithful and authentic performance. Their playing is mechanical and unyielding. One need only compare their version of the Christmas Concerto with that of the Virtuosi di Roma (*D-DL-9649) to realize that the Tri-Centenary's brilliant technical achievement does enormously less for the music than the understanding, flexible playing of the latter group.

Respighi: The Pines of Rome. One side, and **Respighi: The Fountains of Rome.** Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50011) \$5.95.

The tremendous activity of the various recording companies, both major and minor, necessarily gives rise to duplications. Very often the duplication is exasperating (as in the case of one or more poor recordings or performances of the same piece); but at times the duplication can be uncommonly instructive.

Such is the case with the present recording by Mercury of Respighi's two best known tone poems. A few months ago Westminster released this same coupling, using their "new" recording technique. This reviewer wrote, at that time (TNR March '53), that "this is an astonishing record. . . . the finest yet made." Strong words, as one looks back on them but, strangely enough, the new Mercury recording merits the same adjectives. It is also astonishing, particularly so in view of the excellence of the Westminster. Both are superb, if different, examples of the recording art. Each ranks as one of the best engineering jobs yet released.

Differences there are, however, and it may well be that each disc will have its adherents. Mercury's single microphone technique gives a balance that is very listenable—Westminster's sound is more lush, possibly more exciting. One is moving here in the very narrow realm of personal taste and must fall back on the cliché—if this is what you like, you'll like this.

The performances are equally good; the points of difference lie in the conductors' approaches to the score. Quadri on the Westminster, being an Italian, has a more sentimental angle, while Dorati is more straightforward; both are acceptable, and each has merit.

As the reader will have gathered by this time, it is virtually impossible to say which disc is better—both are superior from every consideration. W.

Gliere: Symphony No. 3 in B minor, Op. 42 ("Ilya Mourometz") (complete). Three sides, and **Gliere: The Red Poppy** (Ballet Suite). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-210) \$11.90.

Anyone familiar with this work has, in all probability, made his acquaintance through the Sto-

kowski-Philadelphia Orchestra recording of some years ago, now reissued in the Treasury Series (*V-LCT-1106). At the end of the program notes of that set we find this sentence: "It remains in conclusion to note that Mr. Stokowski has deemed it necessary to abridge several passages in this prodigiously long work." We would call that a generous understatement. After hearing the complete Scherchen performance, Stokowski's could not rightfully be considered a mere abridgement; it is in fact, cut to ribbons. No one can deny Stokowski's version is effective; it has many moments of more dramatic appeal, breathtaking beauty, and general theatrical effectiveness than Scherchen's reading. That was part of the magic of Stokowski and his Philadelphia Orchestra. But for an honest statement of the values in the score of Ilya Mourometz as Gliere wrote it, we must turn to Scherchen. Ilya is a large, sprawling canvas, rather loosely connected in spots, and relying heavily on its program to hold it together. But the composer's conception was a large one, and he achieves an impressive picture. Scherchen is a valiant champion for the work; the orchestra plays valiantly also, which is not to say absolutely perfectly, but with zeal. And Westminster has lavished reproduction of imposing dimensions on this large scale music, resulting in a most impressive recording, up to Westminster's best standards. Thus the Stokowski disc is clearly out of the running, for its age would prevent it from even coming close to this new job in the matter of reproduction.

The Red Poppy Ballet Suite is given a splendid performance by Scherchen and his forces, who offer the six sections with a neatness and precision that make it a worthy coupling in this album. S.

Masterpieces from the Theatre. New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-2064) \$4.80.

CONTENTS: Carmen—Introduction to Act I; La Gazza Ladra—Overture; Midsummer Night's Dream—Scherzo; Euryanthe—Overture.

Masterpieces of the Dance. New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-2066) \$4.80.

CONTENTS: Emperor Waltz; Danse Macabre; Hungarian Dance No. 6; Dance of the Buffoons.

When one opens the jackets of the new Cook Laboratories Sounds Of Our Times records one will find two unique things: first, that the record is completely sealed in a semi-transparent plastic case, which means that the purchaser will be the first to touch or play it after it leaves the factory; second, a certificate, signed by the manufacturer, stating that the dynamic range of the record is "exactly as played by the artists," that "no change in volume to compress or expand was made during the entire recording session," and that the frequency range of the recording apparatus used is "within 2 db from 20 cps to 25,000 cps." These discs have such wide response,

such incredible dynamic range, and such startling over-all reproduction that now and for some time to come these records will probably be considered the ultimate for high fidelity demonstration. C.

Haydn: Symphony No. 45 in F-sharp minor ("Farewell"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 7 in C** ("Le Midi"). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4673) \$5.47.

As we check the LP catalogs we find that Ormandy has not too much competition among the available recordings of these two Haydn symphonies, and with one of the world's greatest orchestras at his command it is not too difficult to come out in the lead. This he does handily, and thus those who are interested in these charming works are recommended to choose the present recorded versions.

Overtures to Famous Zarzuelas. Orquesta de Camara (Madrid) conducted by Ataulfo Argenta. 1-12" disc in album (*MONTILLA FM-LP-6) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Overtures to *La Tore del Oro*, *El Tambor de Granaderos*, *El Baile de Luis Alonso*, *La Boda de Luis Alonso*, *La Revoltosa*, *Goyescas*, *La Picara Molinera*, *La Jota de la Dolores*.

Zarzuelas are musical plays—an unique product of the lyric theatre of Spain. The present LP disc is probably intended for persons of Spanish origin or for those who at least read the language because the booklet which describes the various zarzuelas is printed in Spanish. The publishers very likely felt that others would not be interested in the overtures to these works. However, as the music is for the most part quite light and tuneful, it is just possible that music lovers who have never even heard of a zarzuela before may find this disc quite fascinating. The reproduction is excellent and the record surfaces as smooth as glass.

Italian Baroque Music. Società Corelli, with Luisa Ribacchi (mezzo-soprano). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1767) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1767) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Concerto in A minor (Vivaldi); *Cessate omai* (Vivaldi); *Sinfonia No. 2 in G* (Vivaldi); Concerto Grosso in F, Op. 1, No. 4 (Mancello); *Giudizio Universale*—Suonera l'ultima tromba (Carissimi); Concerto Grosso in E minor, Op. 3, No. 3 (Geminiani).

Here is an unusual record of great beauty. It will introduce to many American music lovers the Società Corelli, a group of seventeen talented young chamber musicians who, after great success in their native Rome, crossed the Atlantic early in the present year for a tour of the United States and Canada. On this tour they were accompanied by the brilliant young Italian mezzo-soprano, Luisa Ribacchi. The Società Corelli specializes in early Italian music, and the present disc contains some truly beautiful 17th and 18th century music from that land of

melody. Four of the selections are purely instrumental and the two others, the Vivaldi *Cessate omai* and the Carissimi aria from *Giudizio Universale*, are for mezzo-soprano and strings. In these two latter pieces Miss Ribacchi is featured.

We hope that our readers will not pass this disc by on the grounds that the music is unfamiliar to them. One does not have to be a profound student to appreciate and enjoy the selections on this unique disc. It is the sort of music that anyone with a reasonably cultivated taste for the better things in the realm of melody may find very much to his liking.

Cherubini: Symphony in D. One side, and **Beethoven: Septet in E-flat, Op. 20.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1745) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1745) \$5.72.

This attractive LP disc contains two selections that might easily be called "serenades" by two contemporary composers (Cherubini was born ten years before Beethoven and survived him by fifteen years). Here is music abounding in refined melodies—music to be enjoyed. Toscanini presents it with the delicate touch that it requires. We predict that this disc will have a wide and continued popularity.

Strauss: Emperor Waltz. One side, and **Strauss: Artist's Life Waltz.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-28) \$2.85.

An inexpensive little LP disc containing two of Strauss' most popular waltzes nicely played by the famous Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. The surfaces of the sample disc sent us were rather noisy—better check for this.

CONCERTO



Lalo: Concerto in D minor for Violoncello and Orchestra. Bernard Michelin (violoncello) with the Haarlem Symphony Orchestra conducted by Toon Verheij. One and one-half sides, and **Fauré: Elégie for Violoncello and Orchestra, Op. 24.** Bernard Michelin (violoncello) with the Utrecht Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Hupperts. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1162) \$5.95.

Lalo: Concerto in F, Op. 20. One and one-half sides, and **Schubert: Rondo in A.** Miriam Solovieff (violin) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1143) \$5.95.

Lalo's *Cello Concerto* is one of the more frequently performed works for this noble instrument, yet this is its first major LP recording; only one other disc is listed in the catalogs. Considering the fine work Bernard Michelin does, it is a pity the recording cannot be given full approval. Michelin is a young French cellist heard for the first time on

American records with this release. He is typical of the famous French school of 'cello virtuosity and combines a smooth and beautiful tone with technical mastery and great expressiveness. The main drawback to this disc is the orchestral accompaniment, which for several reasons did not ring true to us. We doubt that the Haarlem Orchestra is too good an outfit; their tone is coarse and their precision hardly precise. Some of this tonal quality may be due to the quality of reproduction, which is also not in the best balance between solo instrument and orchestra. However, we found the recorded quality of the 'cello beautiful, very faithful and at a correct dynamic level. Those who desire a recording of this work may not find the orchestra unsatisfactory, in which case this disc will be eminently satisfactory as far as the solo artist and the way he is recorded is concerned. The second side filler, the Fauré *Elegie*, is also played beautifully; orchestra and recording are good.

Miriam Solovieff is one of the great woman violinists and a fine artist among all violinists now concertizing. We are indebted to her for bringing the first LP recording of the Lalo *Concerto in F minor* to us and for doing it so splendidly. Her tone is one of purity and moderate size, never harsh, and her technique is masterly. The Lalo concerto is pleasant listening, rather a minor work compared to Beethoven, Brahms, and the other titans, but nevertheless worth a frequent hearing. Miss Solovieff's lovely performance has the benefit of a first rate accompaniment directed by Swoboda and brilliant reproduction, a trifle on the thin side, but not too wiry in sound. The second side filler is a superb bit of violin writing by Schubert which happens to be not in rondo form; it is an Adagio and an Allegro giusto, expertly played by Miss Solovieff.

S.

Mozart: (3) Concerti, K. 107. Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackerman. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1164) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 3 in D, K. 40. One side, and

Mozart: Concerto No. 4 in G, K. 41. Artur Balsam (piano) with the Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1163) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto No. 22 in E-flat, K. 482. One and one-half sides, and **Mozart: Rondo in D, K. 382.** Lili Kraus (piano) with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rudolf Moralt. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7290) \$5.95.

The *Three Concerti for Piano and Strings after J. C. Bach*, which is the formal catalog title of K. 107, were written by the nine-year-old Mozart after spending many happy hours with Johann Christian Bach in England. J. C. Bach was a dominating force in the teaching of young Mozart, and the tribute paid his mentor by Mozart is doubly remark-

able in that these concerti "after" Bach's sonatas emerged with a stamp of individuality unmistakably Mozart. They are, by comparison with the later concerti, with which we are all more familiar, slight and small-scaled exercises in the art. Mozart fanciers will have much to enjoy and talk about with these recordings, all fitted nicely on one LP.

The Concerti Nos. 3 and 4 were also re-write jobs for the young Mozart, whose father kept him busy with assignments calculated to sharpen his considerable aptitude for formalistic purity. The basic materials for these were drawn from miscellaneous works by such figures as J. C. and C. P. E. Bach, Johann Schobert, Hermann Raupach, Eckardt and Honauer. Once again Mozart, eleven years old when he finished this pair, took some material and gave it such a refinement and distinction of his own that it could rightly be considered his own. Artur Balsam has been gradually filling in the gaps in the recorded Mozart concerti by doing the earliest works. These additions to the catalog attest to his superior musicianship with performances of admirable style and proper scale. The rising young conductor, Otto Ackermann, a permanent conductor of the Vienna State Opera, supplies appropriate frameworks for these readings.

With the Concerto No. 22 we come to a mature period of the master's life and one of his great works in this form. Two other versions exist on LP, but neither eclipses this lovely performance by Lili Kraus. It is delightfully played and accompanied; the reproduction is clear and bright.

S.

Glazounov: Concerto in A minor, Op. 82. David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. One side, and **Kabalevsky: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra, Op. 49.** Daniel Shafran (violin-cello) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Dmitri Kabalevsky. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6005) \$5.95.

Khachaturian: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.

Moura Lympany (piano) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-692) \$5.95.

The Glazounov Violin Concerto does not appear with any too great frequency on records, nor for that matter in the concert hall. Milstein has an LP of it in the catalog (*V-LM-1064), and it is a fine performance. The concerto is an enjoyable work in three movements, though not of formal design. The first movement states two themes and gives them an exposition but no development. After the slow middle movement, the finale returns to the opening themes and gives them quite a development culminating in a set of variations employing much brilliant writing for the violin. David Oistrakh plays the work with éclat as well as poise and solid musicianship. He is recognized as one of the finest violinists alive, and this performance is but another testimonial to his truly great art. The accompaniment

and reproduction are good, making this a fine recording. We would give it preference to the Milstein disc mainly for the coupling, which introduces a twenty-nine-year-old 'cellist, Daniel Shafran. This young man is a virtuoso, and has all the qualities which are associated with the best virtuosos. His rendition of the Kabalevsky 'cello concerto, the first on LP, is an impressive piece of work. The concerto is considered one of Kabalevsky's best works. While its themes and construction and workmanship are good, even better is the fact that it suits the solo instrument so beautifully. There is ample opportunity for a singing tone which one loves to hear from a 'cello.

If the 'cello concerto is considered a good work, the piano concerto is still controversial. Some folks consider it banal, boring, second-rate music. We have always found it entertaining and enjoy hearing it a few times each year. It may not be another "Emperor," but it holds interest in its own brash way. Miss Lympany's recording on Decca 78 rpm discs was hailed by most of us as something terrific until Kapell and Levant made their recordings. The present set still does not dislodge the Levant-Mitropoulos recording (*C-ML-4288) from top place in our opinion. The brittle, percussive bite and fiery rendition which they turned out suits this work perfectly and will be hard to better. S.

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Friedrich Wührer (piano) with Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8000) \$5.95.

Previously in these pages we have praised Hans Swarowsky for having given a model performance of some of the works of Haydn and Mozart. His conducting of the Brahms First Piano Concerto, however, is not so excellent as that on the Haydn-Mozart disc, though still an unusual and, in its way, a meritorious performance. It is surely more confident and successful than the Serkin-Reiner recording, and is, in itself, an interesting presentation of a Wagnerian interpretation of Brahms. The tempi throughout are slow but highly controlled in their consistency. The balance between piano and orchestra is a fine and subtley delineated one.

Wührer and Swarowsky move more slowly and assuredly through the labyrinthine work producing more of a sensitively wrought fantasy than a youthful, somewhat belligerent Concerto. Their performance, withal, is the finest available; for those who prefer a smooth and relaxed rather than a dramatic reading it should assume great appeal. C.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Franck: String Quartet. WQXR Quartet: Harry Glickman and Hugo Fiorato (violins); Jack Braunstein (viola); Harvey Shapiro (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1010) \$5.95.

We are delighted to welcome this splendid record-

ing of Franck's string quartet. It is the first and only recording of this important work on LP discs. In fact, it is the first recording of it that has appeared in many years; for what reason we do not know. It would seem to us that it is the outstanding string quartet in the whole category of French chamber music. True, it is a difficult work and requires players who are in just the proper mood; but it would seem that such players could have been found long ere this. However, the selection of the WQXR Quartet was indeed a happy choice, and we are glad to recommend this recorded version even to the most discerning music lovers. The reproduction is of the best, and the record surfaces smooth and quiet.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 7 in F, Op. 59, No. 1. New Italian Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-673) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. Barylli Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5144) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 12 in E-flat, Op. 127. Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1209) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 13 in B-flat, Op. 130. Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1210) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet in E-flat, Op. 74. Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1208) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet No. 1 in F, Op. 18, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Quartet No. 2 in G, Op. 18, No. 2.** Paganini Quartet. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1729) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1729) \$5.72.

Beethoven: (3) Piano Quartets, Op. 152. Artur Balsam (piano) with members of the Pascal String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1215) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Quartet No. 1 in E-flat; Quartet No. 2 in D; Quartet No. 3 in C.

Beethoven: Trio in G, Op. 9, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio in D, Op. 9, No. 2.** Bel Arte Trio. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9635) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Quintet in C, Op. 29. Pascal String Quartet with Walter Gerhard (viola). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1214) \$5.95.

This month another large batch of Beethoven chamber music recordings arrived at the studio. Practically all of the selections on these discs are well-known and have been recorded numerous times. However, there is one disc of special importance. It is Concert Hall record (*CH-CHS-1215). It contains the three piano quartets of Opus 152. We do not recall all three of these little works having been recorded previously. No. 1 in E flat major was recorded a number of years ago on 78 rpm discs by E. Robert Schmitz and Members of

the Roth Quartet but we find no recordings of No. 2 in D major nor No. 3 in C major listed anywhere.

These three works are of prime importance to collectors of Beethoven recordings because they are among his earliest efforts in composition. They date from 1785 and were written when the composer was but fifteen years of age. They were, however, not published until after Beethoven's death. It appears that the great master did not think them of much merit although he used parts of them in his later compositions. The remarkable thing about them is that up until that time no one had written for this combination of instruments (piano, violin, viola and violoncello). It is true that Mozart was experimenting with works in this form at about this time but as he was in Vienna and Beethoven was in Bonn it is not likely that either knew what the other was doing. Mozart produced his two Piano Quartets in the winter of 1785-86, shortly after Beethoven had written his. While they are not of great musical importance, they certainly indicate that the young Beethoven was an innovator, and that from the very beginning of his career he was a leader, not a follower.

Haydn: (6) Quartets, Op. 20 ("The Sun Quartets") (complete). Schneider Quartet. 3-12" discs in box (*HS-HSQ-F) \$18.50.

*HS-HSQ-16: Quartet No. 1 in E-flat and Quartet No. 2 in C. \$5.95.

*HS-HSQ-17: Quartet No. 3 in G minor and Quartet No. 4 in D. \$5.95.

*HS-HSQ-18: Quartet No. 5 in F minor and Quartet No. 6 in A. \$5.95.

Haydn: Die sieben Worte des Erlösers am Kreuze, Op. 51. Schneider Quartet. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSQ-39) \$5.95.

The Haydn Society continues with its project of recording all of the Haydn string quartets and we are glad to announce that the six quartets that make up Opus 20 and *The Seven Last Words of the Savior on the Cross*, Op. 51 are now available. The six quartets may be purchased as a unit in an attractive box or separately as indicated in the heading. We are happy to report that the present recordings are well up to the high standard set by the earlier releases in this series.

CHORAL



Monteverdi: Vespro della Beata Vergine. (Sung in Latin). Margot Guilleaume, Friederike Sailer (sopranos); Lotte Wolf-Mattheus (alto); Heinz Marten, Werner Hohmann (tenors); Franz Kelch (bass); Swabian Choral Singers and Stuttgart Bach Orchestra conducted by Hans Grischkat. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7902) \$11.90.

A letter dated 16 July 1610 and written by one

Bernardo Cusalo refers to a work which Monteverdi was composing and describes it as "una missa a sei voci, di studio e fatica grande" (a mass for six voices, a composition of study and great toil). This statement, insofar as this writer is concerned, is no more nor less than the unvarnished truth. The *Vespro della Beata Vergine* is a monumental work, one that cannot, incidentally, be understood or even partially absorbed at a single hearing.

Monteverdi went to considerable pains to compose a piece that would be acceptable to the church authorities (particularly Pope Paul V) and wrote this tremendous work in the then conservative Northern style which was in favor at the Papal Chapel. The Netherlands polyphony gives the piece its peculiar austerity and religious intensity. Monteverdi was no mere imitator, and what he did was to absorb the style of Gombert and Ockeghem and combine them with his own; the result is a composition which is unique in music history.

The present performance and recording of this intense and personal music is an excellent one. The soloists, Margot Guilleaume especially, are very good, and the accompanying artists are exceptionally capable. It is difficult, virtually impossible, to single out any portion of the *Vespro della Beata Vergine* as being outstanding; it is on a uniquely high plane. The work has a unity and an emotional coherence that are unforgettable.

Vox has really splurged insofar as the package is concerned, for in addition to a very attractive album there are scholarly notes, the complete text, the playing time (102'46" incidentally) and the recording characteristic! Bravo Vox! The recording, from a technical angle, leaves nothing to be desired. The set should be in every collection of choral music worthy of the name; nearly everyone will also find it of more than passing interest.

W.

Honegger: Jeanne d'Arc au Bucher (complete). (Sung and spoken in French). Vera Zorina, Raymond Gerome (speaking); Frances Yeend, Carolyn Long (sopranos); Martha Lipton (contralto); David Lloyd (tenor); Kenneth Smith (bass); John H. Brown (boy soprano); Anne Carrere, Charles Mahieu, Jean Juillard (narrators); Temple University Choirs directed by Elaine Brown; St. Peter's Boys' Choir directed by Harold Gilbert; and Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-178) \$12.11.

Except for this remarkable recording, how many music lovers would ever have the opportunity of hearing this exquisite work of art, the work of two distinguished Frenchmen—Paul Claudel, the celebrated mystic poet and dramatist, who has supplied the text, and Arthur Honegger, one of the outstanding composers of the present century, who has supplied the superb musical score? True, it has been given several times in this country since its first performance in America on 1 January 1948 at New

York with Vera Zorina and the Philharmonic-Symphony under the direction of Charles Münch, but only a comparatively few persons have heard these performances. Now thanks to Columbia's enterprise and altruistic efforts it is available for us and for future generations to listen to and enjoy. We say altruistic because we do not see how such an expensive recording can be a commercial success. During the 1952-53 season Eugene Ormandy arranged for performances of it with Miss Zorina, the Philadelphia Orchestra, choirs, and assisting artists. Columbia seized the opportunity of recording it at that time, and thus the present recording mirrors the highly artistic and successful performances given under Mr. Ormandy's direction during the season just closed.

Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher (Joan of Arc at the Stake) was commissioned by the great dancer and mime, Ida Rubinstein, and is dedicated to her. It was first performed at Basle (Switzerland) on 12 May 1938. It is largely a dialog between the two principal characters, Jeanne d'Arc (Vera Zorina) and Frère Dominique (Raymond Gerome), with musical background. Interspersed are sections for the choirs and numerous characters, both sung and spoken. Briefly, *Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher* might be described as a musico-dramatic version of the familiar story of Joan of Arc with the emphasis on the mysticism of this revered French Saint. In addition to the inspiring music, the beauty of the French diction of the dialog is apparent whether one understands French or not. A fine booklet accompanies this set of discs giving the complete French text and a splendid English translation.

Here is a prime work of modern art superbly performed and recorded. It certainly has our blessing.

R.

Mendelssohn: Die erste Walpurgsnacht, Op. 60 (complete). (Sung in German). Annie Woudt (alto); Leo Larsen (tenor); David Hollestelle (baritone); Netherlands Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackermann. One and one-half sides, and **Mendelssohn: (5) Songs**. Uta Graf (soprano) accompanied by Leon Pommers (piano). 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1159) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Die liebende Schreibt; Neue Liebe; Schilflied; Der Mond; Auf Fluegeln des Gesanges.*

The night between April 30th and May 1st is, in Germany, called the *Walpurgsnacht* as being devoted to Walpurga or Werburga, a British Saint, sister of St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany. In the popular tradition it is supposed to be the night for great festivals of devils and witches on the mountains of the Hartz. Goethe's poem, *The First Walpurgis Night*, set to music by Mendelssohn, describes the origin of the festival or, more properly, the popular superstition.

Mendelssohn wrote this setting of Goethe's poem in the winter of 1830-31 while on a trip to Italy. He wrote his sister that it had become a "grand

cantata with full orchestra" and adds "it may turn out well." He later (1842) re-wrote the work drastically, and it is the revised version that is recorded here.

The piece opens with an overture descriptive of "winter changing into spring." Then follows a series of choruses and solos—all in the best of taste. The music is carefully worked out, but somehow does not go very deep and consequently does not convince.

The performance also fails to impress, but whether it is the fault of the artists or the music is difficult to determine. The soloists Larsen (tenor), Woudt (alto) and Hollestelle (baritone) are only ordinary singers. Ackermann and the Netherlands Philharmonic Choir and orchestra impress us as being routine in their performance. The net result of so much mediocrity needs no description.

Uta Graf, singing six songs of Mendelssohn, including the thrice familiar *Auf Fluegeln des Gesanges*, does well but is in no way exceptional. Concert Hall's recording is good, notes and texts are supplied. Better hear this one first. W.

Flemish Choral Music. Ghent Oratorio Society conducted by Marcel de Pauw. 1-12" disc (*ESO-514) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: 16th Century Polyphonic Songs: *O La, O Che Bon Echo; Serenade van de Landsknecht; Mille Regrets; In't Groene. Guitar Intermezzo: Fiamenga; Gagliarda. Old Flemish Christmas Songs: Maria die Soude Naer Bethlehem gaen; Het was een Maghet Uutvercoren. Old Flemish Love Songs: Ic Sag Caecilia komen; Ic seg adieu; Amoreus liedekijn. Popular Ring Dances; Daer ging 'hen Pater; Reuzelied. Modern Choral Songs: Fantasia; Hymne aan de Schoonheid.*

Motets of the Venetian School (16th Century). Choir of the Capella di Treviso directed by Monsignor Giovanni d'Alessi. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8030) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Cantate Domino, canticum novum; Bonum est confiteri Domino; O sacrum convivium; Missa Pater Peccavi (excerpts); Egredimini et videte (Andrea Gabrieli, ca. 1510-1586). Tristes est anima mea; O salutaris hostia; Lamentations of Jeremiah—Lesson 1 (Giovanni Nasco, d. 1561). Sancti et justi (Claudio Merulo, 1533-1604). Adoramus Te Domine Jesu Christe (Giovanni Matteo Asola, ca. 1560-1609). Sancta Maria (Giovanni Gabrieli, 1557-1612).*

This disc of Flemish Choral music (including two guitar pieces for diversity, but well integrated) is the first recording, to our knowledge, of its type, a balanced anthology in small scale which is outstanding for its artistic arrangement of selections in a remarkably satisfying progression. It is also, incidentally, one of the few available high fidelity recordings of a choral group.

The Venetian Motets here presented are more or

less authentically executed but of unsustained interest because of abnormally heavy sound, due most probably to mediocre recording, if not a little to a too large chorus.

Polyphonic Masters of the XVI Century. Graduating Class (1948) of the Gregorian Institute, directed by Dom Ermin Vitry, O. S. B. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-PM-LP-1) \$4.75.

(This annotation is reprinted from the February 1949 issue. It appeared in this place when the original 78 rpm recording of this work was issued.)

In the foreword to the notes that are supplied with it, the object of this important album is nicely stated. From the foreword we quote:

"In order to gain a proper evaluation of the musical art of the sixteenth century, we are direly in need of recordings which emphasize the true qualifications of this gigantic and yet lofty music. Of the many choral recordings available, classic polyphony is represented only by scant and timid attempts, often times devoid of the true characteristics of this unexcelled period of choral art. The present album brings into proper perspective a form of music which has considerably deteriorated in modern times, and whose acquaintance may restore to contemporary music the healthy objectivity which it has obviously lost."

Most of the selections in this album are for four mixed voices and all of them have been edited by the distinguished scholar of this musical period, Dom Ermin Vitry, O.S.B. We feel that they are authoritative and so recommend them.

The selections are: *O vos omnes* (Palestrina); *Ave vera virginitas* (Josquin des Pres); *Ecce quomodo moritur justus* (Palestrina); *In pace in idipsum* (Orlando de Lassus); *Kyrie* and *Agnus Dei* from *Missa "Ave Maris Stella"* (Josquin des Pres); *Jubilate Deo* (Carolus Andreas); and *Cantate Domino* (L. Viadana).

OPERA

Tchaikovsky—arr. Taneieff: **Romeo and Juliet**—Love duet. One side, and **Gounod: Roméo et Juliette**—Non, ce n'est pas le jour (Act IV). Jean Fenn (soprano) and Raymond Manton (tenor) with the Los Angeles Orchestral Society conducted by Franz Waxman. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8189) \$4.98.

Many years ago, around the late nineties, Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette* was one of the great favorites—rivaling the same composer's *Faust*. Such casts as the two de Reszkes, Emma Eames and the incomparable Lasalle added much to the glamor of the score and, perhaps, concealed some of its weaknesses. Nowadays, the opera has fallen into disrepute, and its memory survives largely because of many sopranos' fondness for the Waltz Song *Je veux vivre dans ce rêve*.

Capitol has done opera lovers a real service by



recording the great fourth act duet, including the long orchestral introduction. Musically it is one of the high spots of the opera, second only to the magnificent *Tomb Scene*, and is deserving of a more extensive acquaintance among students and professionals. The singing, by two young American artists, Jean Fenn and Raymond Manton, is of a very high order—being expressive, understanding and vocally secure.

The other side is a real curiosity and is, for all intents and purposes, a vocal arrangement of the popular tunes from the famous *Overture-Fantasia*. It is curious that Tchaikovsky should have had the same idea as the boys in Tin Pan Alley—only he was some fifty years ahead of them; he had a right to the piece and then never finished or published it. It was his friend and pupil, Sergius Taneieff, who completed the work using portions of the aforementioned *Overture-Fantasia*. Not to be outdone, Conductor Waxman uses a portion of the introduction of the *Overture* in this recording. It all adds up to a very interesting and, of course, melodious work. Miss Fenn and Mr. Manton, joined on this side by Katherine Hilgenberg (who sings the brief portions allotted to the Nurse), do another fine job.

Capitol has recorded both sides in sterling fashion, their FDS technique sounding better than ever. Sour note: there are very sparse comments on the jacket and no texts.

W.

VOCAL

Schubert: Die Winterreise, Op. 89 (complete) (Sung in German). Karl Schmitt-Walter (baritone) accompanied by Hubert Giesen (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-702/3) \$11.90.

Recordings of Schubert's magnificent (there is no other word for it) song cycle *Die Winterreise* have been almost as ill-starred as the tragic subject of the cycle. The three previous sets, Carne on Westminster (TNR Nov. '51), Conrad on Vox (TNR Aug. '50) and Hotter on Decca (TNR Nov. '51) all left something to be desired. This reviewer admits to having strong opinions as to how these songs should be sung (largely due to the unforgettable Hüsch recording) and is apt to judge harshly.

It was, then, with a feeling of "here we go again" that he played this most recent recording by Karl Schmitt-Walter. Herr Schmitt-Walter, if memory serves correctly, sang some Schubert on a Capitol disc of a few years back and sang it very well. Now in a modern recording his fine baritone sounds extremely good and his artistry is of the first order.

The over-all effect of this performance is one of great sincerity and fine musicianship. The soloist sings with conviction, expression and understanding and is at great pains to realize the essential variety of emotional content Schubert wrote in the score. His voice is dark in color and even throughout its range. In short, he is a *lieder* singer both physically

and mentally. He succeeds not so much by trying to sell his voice as he does by re-creating the mood of the song.

In this recording Herr Schmitt-Walter is fortunate in having an accompanist of high calibre—Hubert Giesen—who furnishes a support that is impeccable. Fortunate too, is the superior recording job furnished by London's engineers.

The only fly in the ointment (in this imperfect world, the flies are always with us) is the reluctance of London to supply readable notes and texts. As though it were an afterthought, notes (in themselves, excellent) and German-English texts are printed on the inside of the album covers. The print is so small that after reading them one's eyes "bug out like a tromped on toad-frog's."

Nevertheless the set is highly recommended. It is the best *Die Winterreise* on LP. W.

Beethoven Songs. One side, and **Brahms Songs.**

Herta Glaz (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Leo Mueller (piano). 1·12" disc (*MGM-E-3012) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Andenken; Ich liebe dich; Mailied; Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt; Kennst du das Land; Wonne der Wehmut; Der Kuss (Beethoven); Zigeunerlieder, Op. 103—(8) Songs; Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen, Op. 32, No. 2; Wehe, so willst du mich wieder* (Brahms).

Brahms Lieder. Alice Howland (soprano) accompanied by Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 1·12" disc (*STRAD-STR-610) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Alte Liebe, Op. 72, No. 1; Sonntag, Op. 47, No. 3; Mädchenlied, Op. 107, No. 5; Von ewiger Liebe, Op. 43, No. 1; Der Gang zum Liebchen, Op. 48, No. 1; Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen, Op. 32, No. 2; Der Kranz, Op. 84, No. 2; Immer Leiser wird mein Schlummer, Op. 105, No. 2; Botschaft, Op. 47, No. 1; Wenn du nur zuweilen lächelst, Op. 57, No. 2; Auf dem Kirchofe, Op. 105, No. 4; Dort in den Weiden, Op. 97, No. 4; An die Nachtigall, Op. 46, No. 4; Salamander, Op. 107, No. 2.*

These two *lieder* recitals offer grounds for an interesting speculation on motives or, perhaps, on the artistic standards of the issuing companies. In one case the recording artist is a singer of above average stature and is fairly well known and the price is a modest one, \$4.85. The other disc features a relatively new singer, who reveals little or no understanding of her material, and the price is \$5.95!

Herta Glaz, who made a few records for Victor before the war, sings (and very acceptably) seven of Beethoven's songs and ten by Brahms. The Beethoven group includes such favorites as *Ich liebe dich*, *Andenken*, *Wonne der Wehmut*, the less familiar *Kennst du das Land* and *Mailied*, to mention but a few. Miss Glaz' singing is marked by a warm expressive tone that is admirably suited to the subject

matter. Interpretively the music is presented in a mature and intelligent fashion. The Brahms items receive substantially the same treatment and are, consequently, a thoroughly pleasant experience. The recording is good; Leo Mueller is an extremely able accompanist. Texts and translations are given on the jacket.

Alice Howland falls into the growing category of singers on records (a group that has increased by leaps and bounds since the advent of LP) who are neither good nor bad. She approaches these fourteen songs as so many words to be pronounced, so many notes to be sung. Now fourteen *lieder* by Brahms can be dull when treated so cavalierly—and dull is the word for this recital. Miss Howland's voice is better than her understanding—she needs more training in the interpretive phase of her art.

The texts of the songs are not furnished—the recording is passable. Stradavari should get on the beam; at these prices such packaging is inexcusable.

W.

Mozart: Motet, K. 165 ("Exsultate, jubilate").

(Sung in Latin). One side, and **Mozart: Die Zauberflöte**—Ach, ich fühl's. And **Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro**—Venite, inginocchiatevi. And **Mozart: Il Re Pastore**—L'Amerò, sarò costante. Hilde Gueden (soprano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alberto Erede. 1·10" disc (*L-LS-681) \$4.95.

Schumann: Liederkreis, Op. 39. (Sung in German).

Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1·10" disc (*L-LS-590) \$4.95.

Hilde Gueden is rapidly emerging as one of the better lyric sopranos of our time. On this ten-inch London disc she offers a series of Mozart pieces and all are extremely well sung, particularly as regards style. To sing Mozart effectively the artist must have musical understanding of uncommon depth and this Miss Gueden has. The lovely motet *Exsultate, jubilate* is sung exquisitely; but, as if the gods saw to it that one did not get too much, this truly superior performance is marred by "blasting" towards the inside of the record. It is a recording fault that could have been avoided. The assorted arias are equally fine interpretively and fine examples of Hilde Gueden's considerable art. Aside from the defect noted above, the disc boasts pretty fair recording. Even as it is, the Motet is far superior to any other recorded version.

Vocal gifts of a different nature but of equally high calibre are displayed on the second small disc, this time the artist is the charming Belgian soprano, Suzanne Danco. She has recorded—and very beautifully—the lovely *Leiderkreis* of Robert Schumann. This cycle of twelve songs is Schumann at his lyric best, being second only, in this reviewer's estimation, to the better known *Dichterliebe*. Miss Danco has all the poise, polish and understanding necessary for a successful projection of the warmly romantic *lieder*. The recording has been accomplished in a

technically satisfactory manner. Piano accompaniments that match the soloists mood to perfection are supplied by the able Guido Agosti. W.

Songs of Reynaldo Hahn. Jacques Jansen (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-645) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: (5) *Chansons Grises; Quand je Fus Pris au Pavillon; L'Incredule; Paysage; Phyllis; Si mes Vers Avaient des Ailes; Mai.*

French Art Songs. Jacques Jansen (baritone) with instrumental accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-644) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Trois Ballades de François Villon; Le Promenoir des Deux Amants; Fantoches (Debussy). Les Cigales; Ballade des Gros Dindons; Villa-nelle des petits Canards; L'Île Heureuse (Chabrier). Chansons Madécasses (Ravel).*

These two discs offer as fine a collection of French songs as could be desired. Debussy, of course, is well represented elsewhere as is Ravel, but Chabrier and Hahn, the latter especially, have been but indifferently represented on LP discs.

Reynaldo Hahn was, to a certain extent, a child prodigy. His most famous song, a setting of Hugo's *Si mes Vers Avaient des Ailes* was written in his fifteenth year. All the songs on the Hahn record were written before the composer was twenty-six years old. This is, to put it mildly, quite an accomplishment. Much of the music partakes of the salon—elegant, polished and occasionally superficial; but it is never trivial. The five songs from the cycle *Chansons Grises* are particularly felicitous. Jacques Jansen sings them all with considerable vocal charm, and he also is obviously fond of these light but pleasant songs written in the Gounod tradition.

More serious, more pretentious but sometimes not as rewarding and seldom as charming are the Debussy songs. The Villon Ballads, however, are to be numbered among Debussy's best contributions to the form. Chabrier's little songs are the precursors of the Satie-Poulenc school—humorous and dry, but without the irony or bite of the later writers. Ravel's *Chansons Madécasses* (Songs from Madagascar) have been recorded before, notably by Martial Singher. The three songs *Nohandove* (a tropical love song), *Aoua!* (a hymn of hate against the white invaders) and the final *Il est doux* are all evocative and may be ranked among the best of modern French songs.

Jacques Jansen sings this at times difficult music with appropriate style and the necessary conviction. His able accompanist in both discs is Jacqueline Bonneau and on the latter disc (in the Ravel songs) she is assisted by Maurice Gendron ('cello) and Jean Rampal (flute).

The recording is generally good; there are no texts supplied, nor do the reasonably informative notes compensate for the omission. W.

Song Recital. Mme. Geori Boué (soprano) accompanied by Maurice Fauré (piano). One side, and **Operatic Recital.** Mme. Geori Boué (soprano) with L'Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra de Paris conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7070) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mandoline, Il pleure dans mon cœur, Vert (Debussy); Clair de Lune, Les roses d'Ispahan, Au bord de l'eau (Fauré); Chanson triste, Phidylé (Duparc); Faust—Ballade: Il était un roi de Thulé; Faust—Air de bijoux; Hérodiade—Il est doux, il est bon; Louise—Depuis le jour.*

By and large this is one of the more disappointing LP discs issued recently. It is a hodge-podge to begin with, and Mme. Boué is not able to make it hang together.

The four operatic airs are sung in what can be charitably described as routine fashion. One knows for certain that the soloist can sing the *Faust* music much better than she does here—Geori Boué is the Marguerite in the complete recording of the opera by RCA Victor. The big difference between the present recording and the complete set is in the presence of Sir Thomas Beecham at the helm. The *Hérodiade* excerpt is sung with a hard, brittle voice that has little of the sensuousness one expects of *Salomé*. *Depuis le jour* from Charpentier's sole claim to fame "*Louise*" is perhaps the best sung of the four arias, but it is also the least, musically.

On the reverse side is a group of French art songs ranging from Debussy to Duparc. All have been recorded before, most of them sung with more conviction and variety of expression than Geori Boué can sum up for this occasion. The various songs seem to merge into each other until, at the end of the record, one has difficulty in recalling a single outstanding rendition among them.

Considering the lavish praise that has been showered on the singer, one is at a loss to understand why these performances are so dull. Nevertheless, dull they are, and only slavish admirers of the soloist will, in all probability, be interested. Fair recording has been achieved and the texts of all the music are included. W.

Handel: Italian Cantata No. 14 ("Agrippina condotta a morire"). One side, and **Handel: Italian Cantata No. 13** ("Armida abbandonata"). (Sung in Italian). Agnes Giebel (soprano) with the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rudolf Lamy. And **Handel: Italian Cantata No. 17** ("Pensieri notturni de Filli"). Agnes Giebel (soprano) accompanied by Alfred Mann (recorder), Helmut Reiman (violincello) and Helma Elsner (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-30) \$5.95.

The preponderance of Handel's very numerous Italian Cantatas—of which about one hundred survive—belong to the years of his Italian wanderings. The cantatas, writes Herbert Weinstock in his excellent biography of the composer, "are little known

(and) are in reality only slightly less important in the corpus of Handel's works than Bach's cantatas are in his."

The above seeming extravagant statement is amply justified by the cantatas recorded for the first time on this Oceanic disc. This is a very different Handel from the man who wrote the great oratorios and the florid Italian operas. The first cantata *Armida abbandonata* is a setting of the classical story and is unusual and particularly beautiful because of the restraint with which the rather strong language of the text is set. There is an almost Olympian dignity about the piece that bears ample witness to Handel's consummate taste and workmanship. *Armida abbandonata* was copied out in its entirety by Sebastian Bach, a fact that indicates he (Bach) must have thought very highly of it. The second cantata is a delightful Arcadian work *Pensieri notturni di Filli* (Nocturnal thoughts of Phyllis) that is an almost perfect invocation of spring. The accompaniment of recorder and cello is inspired. The last cantata recorded here, *Agrippina condotta a morire*, is more dramatic, more pretentious but never descends to vulgarity nor "sound and fury" for its own sake. Dignity and decency are the keynotes for all these works.

For the work of soloist Agnes Giebel and conductor Lamy one has only the highest praise. Miss Giebel has a clear lyric soprano, a voice of the utmost flexibility and extreme purity throughout its range. Her sense of style, as well as that of Herr Lamy is unerringly accurate. Oceanic's recording is a beautiful job and thus the disc can be unreservedly recommended. The texts of the three cantatas are included.

W.

Richard Strauss Songs. Anny Felbermayer (soprano), Alfred Poell (baritone) accompanied by Viktor Graef (piano). 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-431) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Hat Gesagt—Bleibt's nicht Dabei*, Op. 36, No. 3; *Ach Lieb, ich muss nun scheiden*, Op. 21, No. 3; *Heimkehr*, Op. 15, No. 5; *Die Nacht*, Op. 10, No. 3; *Schlagende Herzen*, Op. 29, No. 2; *Schlechtes Wetter*, Op. 69, No. 5; *Einerlei*, Op. 69, No. 3; *Morgen*, Op. 27, No. 4; *Winterliebe*, Op. 48, No. 5; *Ruhe, meine Seele!*, Op. 27, No. 1; *Waldseligkeit*, Op. 49, No. 1; *Das Rosenband*, Op. 36, No. 1; *Im Spätboot*, Op. 56, No. 3; *Nichts*, Op. 10, No. 2; *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, Op. 29, No. 1; *Mein Herz ist stumm*, Op. 19, No. 6.

These sixteen songs of Richard Strauss, many of which will be new to American music lovers, offer something of a problem. To be sure, there are a few old favorites, such as *Morgen*, *Ruhe meine Seele* and *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, but the majority are both unfamiliar and, if a few hearings may be trusted, musically inferior to the ones that have enjoyed the greater popularity.

Chief interest then centers in the singing, and it

is exquisite! Anny Felbermayer is as fine a soprano as is singing today. Her voice has a quality best described as silvery—it floats over the music in a manner almost magical. It would be difficult to imagine a more engaging young singer.

Dr. Alfred Poell has long been one of this department's prime favorites—second only to Gerhard Hüsch as a *lieder* singer, which is the highest praise at one's command. His diction is perfect, and his grasp of the *lieder* style is one that comes only from a high order of intelligence and understanding. He has never, to this writer's knowledge, made a poor record, although at times, as in the present disc, the material is not always worthy of his obvious talents.

This record is, as the reader can readily gather, one for Strauss enthusiasts, although those who admire fine singing *per se* will get their money's worth too. The recording on the side devoted to Miss Felbermayer is very good, but the other, unfortunately, was not good at all, at least on the review copy. Texts and translations are furnished. W.

Folk Songs and Ballads. (Sung in English). Helen Traubel (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Robert Armbruster. 3-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-7013) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7013) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Come Again, Sweet Love Doth Now Invite* (Dowland); *Lord Rendal* (trad.); *Greensleeves* (trad.); *He's Gone Away* (trad.); *The Lonesome Road* (Austin); *Bygone Tunes* (Longone); *I'm Wearin' Awa' John* (Nairn); *Son tres mesi, che fo il soldato* (Italian—sung in English); *Come to the Sea* (Italian); *Come Back to Sorrento* (de Curtis).

The songs that Miss Traubel has chosen for this LP disc cover a period of over three hundred years (John Dowland died in 1626) and represent many countries including our own. If it is variety you are looking for here it is. We presume that Miss Traubel selected a number of songs that appeal to her regardless of whether they were popular in Shakespeare's day or her own. We found some of them interesting and some of them not; perhaps you will like all of them; if you do, you certainly have a catholic taste.

PIANO



Mozart: (30) *Pieces for the Piano*. Poldi Zeitlin (piano). 1-12" disc (*OPUS-6003) \$5.95.

Schumann: *Album for the Young, Op. 69* (complete). Poldi Zeitlin (piano). 1-12" disc (*OPUS-6004) \$5.95.

Opus Records has added to its series of recordings for young students of the piano the two new items listed above. The first disc contains thirty short Mozart pieces which Miss Zeitlin has edited for her forthcoming book, "Young Mozart for the Young Pianist." The second disc contains a complete recording of Schumann's "Album for the Young,

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.

Opus 68." This unique work consists of 43 short pieces—the first 18 are for more or less beginners and the second 25 are for more advanced students.

These recordings, as were the former ones, have been made by the distinguished teacher and pianist, Poldi Zeitlin. Miss Zeitlin is a niece and former pupil of the late Artur Schnabel, who first interested her in editing and recording little pieces of the great masters for the use of young pupils of the piano.

As the first two discs, Tchaikovsky's "Album for the Young, Opus 39" (*OPUS 6001) and Beethoven: (21) Pieces for Piano (*OPUS 6002), which were reviewed in our March 1953 issue, were well received by teachers and pupils alike, we feel sure that the present discs have a sizable market awaiting them.

ORGAN



Organ Music. Robert Noehren, playing the organ at Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky (Ohio). 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-3) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Carillon de Westminster (Vierne); Legende (Vierne); Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (Liszt).

Organ Music. Robert Noehren, playing the organ at Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky (Ohio). 1-12" disc (*AUDIOPHILE AP-2) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Carillon de Westminster (Vierne); Legende (Vierne); Scherzetto (Vierne); Divertissement (Vierne); (5) Short Choral Preludes (Reger); Prelude and Fugue on B-A-C-H (Liszt).

Organ Music. Robert Noehren, playing the organ at Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky (Ohio). 2-12" discs in folder (*AUDIOPHILE AP-4/5) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: (3) Chorals (Franck); Prelude, Fugue and Variations (Franck).

In the editorial of the April 1953 issue we listed a number of selections published by Audiophile Records, commenting only on their exceptional range and fidelity; undoubtedly these pressings are some of the finest technical jobs available today—particularly the 78 rpm microgroove records. However, in view of the fact that Robert Noehren is an organist of no mean stature and that little enough of good organ music is presently available, we should now like to comment on the musical value of the discs in the heading above. As a foreword to our remarks we should again call our reader's attention to the fact that the 78 rpm record (AP-3) listed above is a *microgroove* record, and should be played with the same stylus that one uses for LP's and 45 rpm records, setting the turntable, however, for 78 rpm.

Robert Noehren has appeared on discs before, a number of which used the Sandusky organ; but it never sounded like this. Here is truly a new high in

faithful reproduction of a pipe organ. This type of reproduction places the listener in the chancel of the church rather than in the nave, for there is no cloudiness, no disturbing reverberation, nor any other distraction from the actual organ tone. The organist himself, seated at the console, probably does not hear his instrument speaking with the balance that we hear on these discs. No organist can help being thrilled to the marrow of his bones with these records, and we are certain that a large portion of all music lovers will find a new appreciation for the organ when they hear it on these discs. Any mechanical noises heard on these discs are from the organ itself, which does not employ a modern electric action. This organ, when reconstructed in 1950, retained the old mechanical action—there are many organists who realize the playing advantages of a mechanical action.

Noehren presents the three great organ Chorals of Franck, the most distinguished organ music of the 19th century and among the greatest of Franck's compositions. They are supremely beautiful music, and Noehren plays them with a strength and clarity that is characteristic of this man's work at its best. There is no striving for effect, no mannerisms to detract from the splendor of the music. Here are performances of which any organist could be mighty proud. The organ sounds wonderful in every bar of this music, with crescendos and full organ effects of spine-tingling grandeur. No organ library is worthy of the name that does not house this set.

The single LP disc titled "Organ Music" (*AP-2) contains more real organ music from the top drawer. We are finally getting some Vierne—the Westminster Carillon and the Scherzetto are organists' favorites which are mighty welcome on discs. The Reger choral-preludes are also prime examples of well constructed organ music, and Liszt's famous virtuoso organ piece, while many times previously recorded, never had it better than under Noehren's hands. We could go on at a great rate, but by now you have probably gathered that these discs have our unqualified recommendation.

S.

Liszt: Fantasia and Fugue on "Ad nos ad salutarem undam." One side, and **Widor: Symphony No. 9, Op. 70** ("Symphonie Gothique")—Variations. Jeanne Demessieux (organ). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-697) \$5.95.

Jeanne Demessieux is a typical French virtuoso organist who is creating quite a stir among organists for the style of her playing. She is a deadly accurate player but no dull performer, for her interpretations have a flair which is sometimes questionable although usually interesting and exciting. The Liszt *Ad nos* is a good vehicle for this performer, and she offers a stunning rendition. This old showpiece was programmed frequently a few decades ago, and was recorded in the old 78-speed days by some of the top recording organists. Here is the first LP version,

a complete performance and a beauty.

The *Fantasia and Fugue*, composed in 1850, was the first of Liszt's many organ works and is also the largest in scale. It is based on a chorale from the first act of Meyerbeer's opera, *Le Prophète*; the theme is Meyerbeer's own and not, as has sometimes been stated, a traditional chorale. Though designed to be played without a break, the work is divided into three main sections: the Fantasia proper, a central slow section, and the final Fugue. The effect of the work is as logical as it is wonderful, for after a brilliant fantasia, the calm and meditative Adagio brings us one of Liszt's finest inspirations; the work is capped with a magnificent fugue. This fugue is a regular four-part work for a while; then the classical fugue ends, and the treatment becomes freer and freer with all kinds of variations thrown in. A powerful climax brings the work to a satisfying close.

Widor's *Symphony No. 9*, or "Gothic" Symphony, for organ consists of four movements, of which the Variations form the finale. The movement starts out simply, builds up in power and complexity, and ends in the simple style of the opening. We enjoyed this disc more than any other by Demessieux and recommend it to those interested in the material recorded. It would be nice if London would let us know what organ is being used. However, it is of the robust, romantic, church variety, and is very well recorded.

S.

MISCELLANEOUS



Recorder Music of Six Centuries. Recorder Consort of the Musician's Workshop. 1-12" disc (*CLASIC EDITIONS CE-1018) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Tanzlied (Reuenthal); Stantipes, Saltarello, (3) Italian Villanelas (Anon.); Mes Espris (Machault); Gram piant' agli ochi (Landini); Si je perdu mon ami (Josquin des Pres); Suite of Dances (Suzato); (3) German Dances (Praetorius); Ricercare (Willaert); Fantasia a Tre (Bassano); (3) Fantasias (Lasso); Fantasia (Byrd); (2) Fantasias (Morley); Chromatic Fantasia (Diomede); (2) Fantasias (Gibbons).

Since none of the music on this record was written specifically for recorders, and since most of it would sound substantially more attractive in other settings, we may assume that the chief reason for the presentation is simply to provide a recording of recorders. Therefore, this disc, (which, incidentally, is well performed) is predominantly of interest to those who are concerned with the instruments involved. As a brief anthology of early music it proffers only minor values.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: BG—Bach Guild, BL—Bibletone, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Deca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoterio, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Perlon, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOL—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/2 rpm.
G indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY
"The World's Record Shop"

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VOL. 21, NO. 5

JULY, 1953

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

FOR many years the Linguaphone Institute has been supplying sets of records for learning foreign languages. Recently, largely because of the many refugees that are coming to this country, there has been an insistent demand for a quick and simple method of learning English. Practically all of the refugees expect to make the United States their permanent home and therefore wish to learn our language as quickly as possible. Linguaphone has always had sets of records for learning English which were sold in various countries all over the world but these sets all taught the student to speak English as it is spoken by the upper classes in England—with the long A sound and with *been* to rhyme with *green* instead of with *sin*, etc. As the folks who have come to the United States wish to speak as we do, an entirely new set of records had to be made. This task has been accomplished under the direction of W. Cabell Greet, Ph.D., of the faculty of Barnard college, Columbia University. Thus we have a set of records with which to learn "American" English.

These sets consist of sixteen 78 rpm discs. Thirty lessons are contained on fifteen of the discs and the sixteenth record is a phonetic one giving the various sounds of the letters in our alphabet. The first few lessons are spoken very slowly and deliberately—as one would speak to a child—but as the lessons progress the speakers talk more rapidly as one would speak in ordinary conversation. Several voices, both male and female, are heard on the records so that the student may become accustomed to how various persons speak. Thus the trouble a young child has who has been taught to talk by his mother is avoided; he understands her perfectly but has difficulty understanding anyone else.

Sets for learning "American" English are

available for persons of the following nationalities: Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian and Portuguese. As nothing but English is spoken on the records they are the same for all students but the text books are in the appropriate language that the student understands. In ordering a set of these records simply request the Linguaphone set for learning "American" English and mention that it is for a person who understands French or German or whatever his native language is.

The price of these sets consisting of the sixteen discs, text books and a convenient carrying case is \$57.50 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning July 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

ORCHESTRA



Borodin: Symphony No. 1 in E-flat. One and one-half sides, and **Dohnanyi: Symphonic Minutes, Op. 36.** Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7066) \$5.95.

Dohnanyi: Ruralia Hungarica, Op. 32b. One side, and **Kodály: Háry János Suite.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Schuechter. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3019) \$4.85.

The surprise package in this group is the Borodin *Symphony No. 1*, coming to light for the first time on discs—and the first time in performance for most of us. Borodin is a highly respected composer considering the few works which he contributed, among

which is the well known *Symphony No. 2*. While the present symphony may not be the equal of the familiar *Second*, it is nevertheless a fine work. The 29-year-old Borodin, under the tutelage of Balakirev, set to work on the *First Symphony* in 1862, but five years passed before its completion. Balakirev himself conducted the first performance, and in a dozen years it was one of the first large-scale orchestral works by a Russian to win a wide European success.

The thematic material is good, and it is worked out extremely well. There is a nice rhythmic quality and drive to the score, with a fair amount of Russian flavor (of that day). The neglect of this work is unexplainable, for it has a lot of appeal. Kurt Graunke and the Bavarian Orchestra provide a telling account of the music, playing with fervor and conviction—a brilliant performance that is admirable in every respect. The reproduction is good. The second side filler is an innocuous affair, slightly sub-standard Dohnanyi but pleasant, anyhow. It is in four short movements: Capriccio, light and playful; Rhapsody, folksongish and pastoral; a double movement Scherzo and Theme and Variations; and lastly a gay Rondo in perpetual motion manner. Graunke does another splendid job with this music too; judging by this disc, Graunke is a top-notch conductor.

Ruralia Hungarica is a fine work by Dohnanyi, first written as a piano suite of the same title and orchestrated a year later (five of the seven movements only were orchestrated). It is performed both ways these days; this is its first complete recording. Schuechter and the Philharmonia play it nicely. Schuechter tackles the brilliant *Háry János Suite* bravely and turns in a remarkably fine performance, individual in at least one respect: he does not race the *Intermezzo*, preferring a slower and more romantic approach which results in a valid reading of great impact. We think Ormandy generally has the better of it in this work (*C-ML-4306), but we can give Schuechter a lot of credit. MGM's reproduction in this disc is their best so far; they reversed the disc labels on our copy.

S.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor. New Orchestral Society of Boston conducted by Willis Page. 1-10" disc (*SOT-2065) \$4.80.

The New Orchestral Society of Boston is a symphony orchestra composed entirely of top-ranking orchestral players. We would assume they are drawn largely, or entirely, from the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Willis Page is a guest conductor of the summer Esplanade Concerts of the Boston Pops Orchestra, director of the St. Cecilia Choral Society of Boston, and the Little Symphony Society of Boston. Pierre Monteux was his artistic mentor. This is considered a musicians' orchestra, and we are told this whole set-up is something very special.

The records in this series are packaged in a

sealed plastic envelope inside the usual type of jacket. With each disc is a "certificate of range" which warrants the dynamic and frequency ranges; the frequency range of the recording apparatus is at least 25,000 cycles per second. As we are learning these days, frequency range is not the only thing that makes a pleasant and lifelike sound on records, for balance and other things contribute to the illusion of a full symphony orchestra. Emory Cook of Sounds of Our Time Records has produced a record that is indeed brilliant, but also nicely balanced, of faithful timbre, and pleasing to the ear. The clarity of the orchestra is most striking. The finer your equipment, the better this disc will sound; on small reproducers, you will enjoy this disc most with the treble control turned back a bit.

As for the performance of the work—and that counts too, for many of us—we must admit Page is quite a conductor, and the orchestra plays with splendid qualities of tone, precision, and style. We were most enthusiastic about the disc until we hit the final movement, and at that point we were less than completely satisfied. You may not find this movement too fast and lacking in perspective, in which case this is a fine recording. We still think that for the best interpretation on LP discs, and for a mighty fine reproduction, Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony, complete on one side of a twelve inch disc, still rate tops (*ME-MG-50010).

S.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 7, Op. 131. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. One side, and **Prokofiev: Lieutenant Kijé Suite, Op. 60.** Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4683) \$5.45.

The first American performance of the Prokofiev *Symphony No. 7* was given by The Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy, in April 1953. It was composed in 1952 and was first presented on October 11 in Moscow. Columbia is to be congratulated for losing no time in making this fine recording available. You will be surprised on hearing this work to find it strikingly simple, unaffected, pleasant and genuinely easy to enjoy on first hearing. There is no striving for new effects. We would call it a good, solid symphony by a master of the craft. Whatever Prokofiev was, or had been, and whatever the Russians' interpretation of the content of his works, we will avoid discussing, for this work is so obviously pleasing that other considerations are only a waste of words. We feel certain there is a minimum, if any at all, of political thought or nationalistic feeling in this score. This is in line with a quotation from *Pravda* which we find on the cover notes, discussing the traditional four movements: "The first movement ranges from a children's fairy tale through romantic dreams to the first active aspirations of youth. The second is a symphonic waltz; the third is a brief but deeply lyric and expressive movement. The fourth combines the moods of a gay dance and an energetic march, spiced

with the humor and droll wit which appears so frequently in Prokofiev's music." We would add that this humor and wit, while characteristic of good Prokofiev music, is not of the biting satire variety found in some of his, and other modern Russian, works. We have nothing but enthusiasm for this fine new symphony, and for the superb performance which Ormandy and the Philadelphians deliver. Even for a new and unfamiliar work, we have the feeling this rendition would be mighty difficult to better. The reproduction is tops, too.

Lieutenant Kijé is available in two other fine recordings, each with worthwhile couplings. However, since the principal interest in this disc is the symphony, we will merely say that Kurtz' reading is highly competent, comparing favorably with either of the others, and well recorded. If you are after *Lieutenant Kijé*, and not the *Seventh Symphony*, you may wish to compare this one with Désormière (*CL-P-8149) and with Scherchen (*WEST-WL-5091).

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano), Elisabeth Höngen (contralto), Julius Patzak (tenor), Hans Hotter (baritone) with the Choral Society of the Friends of Music (Vienna) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert van Karajan. 2-12" discs in album (*C-EL-51) \$7.25.

Now that Toscanini has come as close to the Ninth as he can, the air has been cleared for somebody actually to come close to it. That somebody, we think, is Herbert von Karajan, whose recording for Columbia is probably the best over-all version available. The team of Schwarzkopf, Höngen, Patzak and Hotter, beyond being able to cope with their parts, is truly excellent. The Vienna Philharmonic has never sounded better, nor could it nor the Choral Society of the Friends of Music be more responsive to von Karajan's exacting demands.

The first movement is squarely played in traditional fashion without quite fully realizing the ultimate tragic possibilities that only Scherchen (*WEST-WAL-208) has portrayed. The scherzo is slightly fussy with unnecessary dynamics. The adagio, however, is the most exquisite one we have heard. And the choral movement, if only because it is the only one to be performed accurately, is without competition; which is merely a minimum criticism, a more significant statement being that von Karajan sets forth in that section an organic unity and over-all rightness that is unique among the recorded versions of this work and would be rare in any performance.

Those who have felt that Beethoven's Eighth Symphony is greater than most conductors will permit it to be will here find justification for their belief. This, the last of Beethoven's classical symphonies,

under von Karajan's direction sounds truly like the spirit and summation of its formal type. The first movement contains a fusion of power and lightness that is remarkably removed from the usual hurried, noisy performance. The other three movements are taken leisurely but economically and are sonically meaningful such as no other performance we have heard. Withal this recording contains a musical insight that is rare.

C.

Dixieland Jazz (Vol. II). Harry Blons and his Dixieland Band. 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-6) \$5.50.

CONTENTS: *My Inspiration; Dallas Blues; Clarinet Marmalade; My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean; Just a Closer Walk with Thee; Panama.*

Dixieland Jazz (Vol. III). Loring "Red" Nichols and His Band. 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-7) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Three Blind Mice; Memories of You; Manhattan Rag; Easter Parade; Tin Roof Blues.*

Dixieland Jazz (Vol. IV). Loring "Red" Nichols and His Band. 1-12" disc (AUDIOPHILE AP-8) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Peaceful Valley; Candlelights; I'm on the Gravy Train; Corky; I Can't Believe that You're in Love with Me; Rondo.*

In the April 1953 issue, when we reviewed an LP disc entitled "Ellington Uptown" (*C-ML-4639), we stated that ". . . there has been considerable clamoring among jazz enthusiasts for the issuance of good jazz on wide range records." In the same issue we announced, editorially, the availability of "Dixieland Jazz" (Vol. I) issued by Audiophile Records, commenting at some length on its exceptional fidelity and wide range, but not on the music at all.

We can now announce the availability of the three 78 rpm *microgroove* records listed above, one by Harry Blons' Dixieland Band and two by "Red" Nichols and His Band. They are surely up to Volume I fidelity-wise, and they are good jazz. The purchaser will find, however, that Audiophile is an apt name for the publisher of these discs, because not one word appears on the jackets or labels about the personnel of the bands; as a matter of fact, we had to look in an old copy of *Hot Discography* to discover that Loring Nichols was, in fact, the "Red" Nichols with whom most jazz fans are familiar. All we can tell you is that Nichols' band seems to consist of a bass saxophone, clarinet, piano, guitar, drums, and alto saxophone, along with Nichols' cornet; Blons' outfit is similar but has no bass sax, but includes a trombone and possibly a bass viol.

The playing is relaxed; the boys seem oblivious to what must have been considerable care on the part of the recording engineer to have captured with such remarkable fidelity all the sound on these discs. Plenty of "kicks" here, both for the jazz and

hi-fi fans. Recording characteristic are given on the jackets of these discs.

We reiterate that these are 78 rpm *microgroove* discs, and therefore must be played with the same stylus used for LP records (.001"). J.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D ("The Titan").

Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7080) \$5.95.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D ("The Titan").

Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-436) \$5.95.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D ("The Titan").

Pro Musica Symphony, Vienna, conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8050) \$5.95.

For a long time Mitropoulos has had the field to himself with the Mahler *First* (*C-ML-4251), and it has been considered a good performance. Now we have three new discs of this work, representing two new versions. How *Urania* and *Vanguard* appear with the same performance is more than we can fathom, but a careful check convinces us these are one and the same. In the matter of reproduction, however, *Vanguard* has transferred the tape to disc with a far more brilliant effect than *Urania*. On our machine, the *Vanguard* was shrill and strident, and actually unpleasant in many passages; *Urania* transfers at a lower level, and on most machines this disc will sound better. As for *Vox*, their disc sounded best of all, and we were inclined to prefer Horenstein's reading. Borsamsky does this work in a more straightforward manner, with less posturing, heroics, and rhetoric, but Horenstein is nevertheless more convincing to our ears. If you like Mahler tightened up a bit, take Borsamsky; if you like it played "eloquently" and with plenty of breadth, Horenstein will thrill you. Comparing these two with Mitropoulos, Mitropoulos appears more tightly knit and more dramatic than either of them, but his reproduction is not as vivid as the newer discs.

This is a highly interesting score and one which those who generally do not care for Mahler, and his later and larger works, may well enjoy. All of the recordings have adequate program notes which convey an idea of the score, the story of the ironic funeral march third movement, and other of Mahler's ideas. Anyone who likes a wild and heroic ending to a symphony will find a super creation as the crown of this symphony, and here again Horenstein separates the threads better than the others. S.

Scriabin: Poème d'Extase, Op. 54. One side, and

Loeffler: A Pagan Poem, Op. 14. Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8188) \$4.98.

Capitol does us a fine service by recording Loef-

fler's *Pagan Poem*. Charles Martin Loeffler came from Alsace to America as a young man, and here developed a sensitive and original talent. He was a painstaking craftsman; the *Pagan Poem*, for example, was originally written for a small chamber group of piano, viola, bass, five woodwinds and five brass and later arranged for piano and three trumpets. After experimental performances with these instrumentalities, the composition was finally expanded to symphonic proportions and thus presented for the first time late in 1907 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Loeffler played first violin with the Boston orchestra for more than a score of years.

A *Pagan Poem* was suggested to the composer by the two love songs of the eighth Eclogue of Virgil, sometimes called "The Sorceress." The poetry tells of a Thessalian girl's attempt to win back her lover through magic spells and incantations, and of her warm and exultant success.

The Russian, Alexander Scriabin, was a deeply thoughtful person, seriously concerned with the philosophical problems of life. Through music, he felt, the emotional aspects of his philosophy could best be communicated, and in *The Poem of Ecstasy* he sought to describe the joy of unrestrained creative ability, his highest goal. In this subjective realm he wisely avoided too clearly defined a program for the music. He gave the music three divisions, but was not content to rely on the music alone to transmit the message, so he wrote a lengthy poem to accompany the orchestral composition.

Manuel Rosenthal, talented conductor of the Paris Philharmonic, performs this music with distinction and it is recorded excellently. Both works appear on LP for the first time. The jacket notes sum it up well by saying: "The two works in this album have come from opposite sides of the globe, yet they are strangely similar in their titles and in their lush and sensuous nature—and they made their orchestral debuts only a year apart. Their two widely separated composers came by different routes to a single aspiration: to express strong passion in a fresh manner, without the cloying sentimentality of the day." S.

Swanson: A Short Symphony. One side, and **Kupferman: Little Symphony.**

Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-434) \$5.95.

We have to thank the discerning Franz Litschauer for making available the first recordings of works by these two important American composers, and we salute *Vanguard* for importing the tapes and releasing this LP disc so promptly on this side of the Atlantic. Now Swanson and Kupferman will not be just names to music lovers in our country—samples of their work in the field of symphonic music are now at hand for our study and appraisal.

Howard Swanson was born in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1899. A graduate of the Cleveland Institute of Music, he was awarded a Rosenwald Fellowship and studied with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. He returned

to the United States in 1941 and since that time has devoted himself entirely to composition. He has composed in many forms, but he is best known for his songs and the present *A Short Symphony*. This latter work dates from 1948 and was first performed by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony under Mitropoulos during November 1950. Since that time it has appeared on the programs of nearly every important symphony orchestra in this country. It is a great favorite of Charles Münch and Eugene Ormandy and has appeared on their programs a number of times. At a recent performance by the Philadelphia Orchestra, the distinguished writer on musical subjects, Charles O'Connell, said in his notes for this concert: "the *Short Symphony* is often song-like; indeed, one eminent critic has referred to Swanson as 'an American Fauré.' His ideas of harmony are individual, perhaps daring, certainly not drastic and nowhere in the *Short Symphony* is there evidence that he has employed harmonic novelty for its own sake."

Meyer Kupferman was born in New York in 1926. He graduated from the High School of Music and Art in 1943. At present he is teaching composition and chamber music at Sarah Lawrence College. Despite his youth he has already to his credit a number of compositions in various forms: orchestral, choral, operatic and chamber music. *The Little Symphony* was commissioned by Daniel Saidenberg and was given its first performance under his direction during November 1952. During February of the present year it was most successfully performed by the Los Angeles Symphony under the direction of Alfred Wallenstein. This work has been called "The American 'Classical Symphony.'" Like Prokofiev's masterpiece, Kupferman's opus is a modern throwback to the era of Mozart and Beethoven.

Certainly both of these compositions are worthy of being recorded, and we are happy to be able to bring them to the attention of our readers. R.

Schönberg: A Survivor from Warsaw, Op. 46 and **Schönberg: Kol Nidre, Op. 39**. Hans Jaray (narrator), Academie Chamber Chorus and Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Swarowsky. One side, and **Schönberg: Chamber Symphony No. 2 (1939)**. Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Herbert Häfner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4664) \$5.45.

One of the most valuable Schönberg LP's yet released, this one contains three of his most significant works. The *Second Chamber Symphony*, started in 1908 but unfinished until 1939, has much of the spirit of the *Serenade for Septet and Baritone Voice*—but without the latter's intensity or economy, being more an example of the style that was to reach its full fruition in that *Serenade*.

A Survivor from Warsaw (1939), a cantata for the Koussevitzky Foundation, text by the composer, relates the tale of a survivor of a Nazi death march; *Kol Nidre* (1946), of course, is based upon the

traditional Jewish prayer. Both are taut with a dramatic cogency that creates an atmosphere at times almost suffocating. Rarely has there been a fusion of recitation and music as organically correct as these. Orchestrally, these works represent what is probably the most direct and effective scoring Schönberg has ever executed. Performances, throughout, are expert and apparently flawless. C.

Folksongs from the British Isles (arr. Gibbs). Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4003) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *I Am the Boy for Bewitching Them*, *Over Here*, *Planxty Kelly*, *Get Up Early*, *Gentle Maiden*, *Sentry Box* (Irish); *Ballad of Yarrow* (Scottish); *Have You Seen but a White Lillie Grow*, *Drink to Me Only*, *When Dull Care, Waly Waly*, *Oyster Girl* (Old English); *Hares on the Mountain*, *Lord Rendal*, *Green Broom* (Somerset).

Music by Strauss and Gunzl. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4004) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Artists Life*, *Ritter Pazmann-Czardas* (arr. Goehr), *Pizzicato Polka*, *Fledermaus-Walzer* (arr. Goehr) (Strauss); *Soldatenlieder Walzer*, *Amoretten Tänze*, *Hydropathen Walzer*, *Casino Tänze* (Gunzl).

Entering the field of recorded light music, Westminster brings to that phonographic area the high standards of quality and taste that it has exercised in the classical field. It has brought, too, an excellent high fidelity recording technique which generally, heretofore, has been restricted to classical recordings, rarely being extended to semi-classical discs. Mainly, however, it has provided a kind of light music which is the product of untainted old world color and culture, played by musicians intimately familiar with this kind of pleasure, which has rarely been made available to American audiences.

The Strauss-Gunzl disc (Gunzl was a Viennese composer who, having spent a good part of his life in England, "transmitted the Viennese gaiety to the British Isles") is executed by a small group whose sound is relaxed, intimate and vastly removed from the industrial Boston Pops style. *Folksongs of the British Isles* is a fresh and unpretentious presentation of native tunes the simplicity and originality of which are a change from most light music recordings in which the niceties are usually invisible under orchestral mascara. This is music for those who wish to relax but not to go to sleep. C.

Shostakovich: Ballet Russe. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Serenade Melancolique** and **Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 13—Andante**. Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Efrem Kurtz. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4671) \$5.45.

The *Ballet Russe*, which dates from 1950, is a dance suite that Shostakovich is said to have written

to attract as wide an audience as possible. It therefore abounds in many lively and tuneful melodies—just the sort of gay music that anyone may enjoy. It probably won't add anything to his musical stature, but it will certainly attract a number of listeners who might pass it by if it were a bit more profound. This is the first recording of *Ballet Russe*, and Columbia is to be congratulated for assigning this recording to the brilliant director of ballet music, Efrem Kurtz. Mr. Kurtz gives it everything he has; and that is a lot, as those who are familiar with his many other ballet music recordings well know.

The pleasing Tchaikovsky selections that occupy the reverse side of this disc are highly acceptable, but it is the dazzling recording of *Ballet Russe* that will put this record on the best sellers list.

MacDowell—arr. Camarata: *Woodland Sketches, Op. 51*. Camarata and His Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4059) \$2.50.

Camarata has made a highly acceptable orchestral arrangement of the complete *Woodland Sketches* by the American composer, Edward MacDowell, and with his splendid little orchestra has recorded it. This suite is composed of ten short selections, the best known of which are *To a Wild Rose*, *In Autumn* and *To a Water Lily*. If you are in the mood for such pleasing melodic music, the present inexpensive little disc should prove attractive.

Gypsy Songs. Antal Kocze ("King of the Gypsies") and His Band. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3001) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Hora*; *Sad Sunday*; *Romance le Lac* and *Blaskovicz Walzer*; *Hungarian Song*; *Magyar Melody*.

This charming little LP disc contains some Hungarian gypsy music *par excellence*! It is played by Antal Kocze and His Band, which has been the featured attraction at the famous Monseigneur Bar in Vienna for many years. This small cafe is known to both tourists and natives, who crowd it nightly principally to listen the music of this unique ensemble consisting of two violins, viola, violoncello, contrabass, piano and cymbalom.

Rhapsodies for Piano and Orchestra. Morton Gould (piano) conducting His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4657) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Fascinatin' Rhythm*, *Someone to Watch Over Me* (Gershwin); *All the Things You Are* (Kern); *My Ship* (Weill); *Waltz Rhapsody* (from "Oklahoma"), *A Wonderful Guy*, *Hello Young Lovers*, *It's a Grand Night for Singing*, *If I Loved You* (Rodgers); *I Can't Get Started* (Duke).

The ingenious Morton Gould has taken several popular songs and arranged them for piano and orchestra in the form of rhapsodies. Mr. Gould then seats himself at the piano and directs his orchestra in thrilling performances of these intriguing works. We found them quite fascinating—perhaps you will too.

Dvořák: (4) *Slavonic Dances*. One side, and **Enesco**: (2) *Rumanian Rhapsodies*. Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Seitzky. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8209) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Slavonic Dances* No. 1 in C, Op. 46; No. 2 in E minor, Op. 46; No. 4 in F, Op. 46; No. 8 in G minor, Op. 46 (Dvořák). *Rumanian Rhapsodies* No. 1 in A, Op. 11; No. 2 in D, Op. 11 (Enesco).

Fabien Seitzky is an ideal conductor of this Dvořák and Enesco music, and he has achieved performances with his Indianapolis Symphony that will be hard to equal. Fine reproduction is an added feature of this attractive LP disc.

Gershwin: An American in Paris. One side, and

Gershwin: Rhapsody in Blue. Elite Concert Orchestra conducted by Max Marschner, with Gerhard Stein (piano). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-3063) \$2.95.

Here is a very good inexpensive LP disc containing two of Gershwin's most popular pieces. As such we do not hesitate to recommend it.

CONCERTO



Liszt: Concerto No. 1 in E-flat. One side, and

Liszt: Hungarian Fantasia. Claudio Arrau (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4665) \$5.45.

Another recording of the so-called "Triangle" Concerto follows hard on the heels of the Iturbi issue of a few months ago (*V-LM-1734). This time we have a better orchestra, a better conductor, and a better recording balance. There may be something to be said for the soloist conducting his own accompaniment, but in most cases there is a lot more to be said for a good conductor who knows his trade to conduct the accompaniment for any soloist. In this case, we have just such a conductor, and he is in close rapport with his soloist. The orchestra plays with the flair you expect from this renowned group, and the results are better than Iturbi managed in the dual job. There are many noticeable points when one compares these two discs. The matter of balance between orchestra and soloist is not alone the engineer's concern in a recording—the conductor still has plenty to do in this respect. And the matter of balance within the orchestra is the conductor's business too; you can hear good examples of this in the little scherzo. This corresponds to the third movement; in this work, it is the third section, wherein the triangle gets to work and provides the issue which led to the nickname of the concerto. In this section Ormandy's accompaniment is perfectly proportioned and adjusted. The quality of piano tone is notably fine on both sides of this disc. We would give the present disc top billing among the many recorded versions, for Arrau plays with demoniac precision

* indicates LP 88 1/2 rpm.
g indicates 45 rpm.

and vigor.

Arrau performs the *Hungarian Fantasia* with the same bravura that he does the concerto, and Ormandy and the orchestra are in there pitching with all their might and main. This, to us, was an even more thrilling workout than the concerto—some of the piano passages which Arrau tosses off are breathtaking. Here is a disc which will appeal to those who like brilliant technical display; they will get it from Arrau, with some extra thrills thrown in by Ormandy and his boys.

S.

Elizalde: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. Christian Ferras (violin) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Gaston Poulet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-564) \$4.95.

Federico Elizalde was once well known to a public different from that which, gathered at the 1936 Festival of International Society of Contemporary Music, heard a *Sinfonia Concertante* by this representative of Spain. It is a far cry from that distinguished occasion to those numerous appointments kept by a delighted radio and phonograph public with "Fred Elizalde and his Music," away back in the early days of British broadcasting. In 1931 he threw up this very profitable career for that of a composer of serious, large-scale works. He studied in his native Spain with Falla and Pérez Casas, and in San Francisco with Alfred Hertz. Elizalde now lives in France.

The *Violin Concerto* is in three movements. It has the spirit of Spain in it, but is not dependent on native material. The scoring is bright and the violin writing is attractive, with but a modest touch of what we might call the modern idiom. Harmonically it is rather conventional; for the most part we would deem it a work mostly in the romantic vein. London breaks the second movement, an occasional habit of theirs, which is justified in this case only because it prevents coupling another piece with this work. Christian Ferras is a talented young fiddler who plays this work with technical proficiency and an obvious belief in it, a greater belief than his accompanying forces. We would not hail this concerto as another in the procession of great violin concertos by Mendelssohn, Beethoven, Brahms, through Prokofiev; but you may find it diverting on a warm summer evening.

S.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Beethoven: Quartet No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 131. The Paganini Quartet. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1736) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1736) \$5.72.

And now we have another recording of Beethoven's *Quartet, Opus 131*. The competition will be Columbia's recording by the Budapest Quartet. We might spend considerable space making a written comparison, but the net result would only be our personal opinion. As both versions are readily avail-

able at your favorite record shop, we feel that it is better if you will make your own comparison. If this is not practical, you won't go far wrong no matter which recording you select; both the Budapest and Paganini ensembles are top-flight musical organizations.

Rossini: Sonata for Violin, Violoncello and Double Bass. And Concerto in C minor for Oboe and Strings (Anon.). One side, and Cambini: Concerto in G for Piano and Strings. And Bonporti: Recitative for Violin and Strings. Virtuosi di Roma directed by Renato Fasano. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9674) \$5.85.

The Virtuosi di Roma, referred to by Toscanini as "the greatest instrumental ensemble of this age," needs neither introduction nor praise. Their reputation has been as brilliantly sustained as it was brilliantly established. It is therefore necessary only to report that the anonymous Oboe Concerto is the one which on two other and inferior recordings is credited to Benedetto Marcello; the Rossini work displays that composer's theatrical qualities in classical form; the Cambini Concerto is a strict eighteenth century work with anachronistic romantic moments; and the Bonporti *Recitative* is one of those remarkable string pieces which sounds as dateless as it does vital.

Schubert: Rondo Brilliant in B minor, Op. 70. Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Carlo Bussotti (piano). One side, and Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96. Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4642) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in D, Op. 12, No. 1. One side, and Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96. Jean Fournier (violin) and Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5176) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 6 in A, Op. 30, No. 1. One side, and Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23. Jean Fournier (violin) and Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5164) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sonata No. 33 in F, K. 377. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 22 in A, K. 305** and **Mozart: Sonata in E-flat, K. 58.** Walter Barylli (violin) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5145) \$5.95.

Mozart: Sonata No. 32 in B-flat, K. 454. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata No. 41 in E-flat, K. 481.** Reinhard Peters (violin) and Charles Rosen (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-674) \$5.95.

Among the batch of chamber music recordings that has arrived recently we have grouped those listed above, for they all contain selections for violin and piano. All of the Beethoven sonatas are already available in other recorded versions. The Schubert *Rondo Brilliant in B minor, Op. 70* and the Mozart

sonatas are new items in the LP catalogs. We notice that the number of the Mozart Sonata in E-flat, K. 481 on the London record (*L-LL-674) is given on the label as '33; according to our information this should be 41 and we so listed it in our heading. We mention this just in order to save any unnecessary confusion.

Perhaps when LP records are not as popular as they are at present, fewer will be issued each month and then we will have the space to consider each one individually as they are released; at present all that we can do is to list them so that our readers will know of their availability.

The Mannheim School. New Art Wind Quintet: Murray Panitz (flute); Melvin Kaplan (oboe); Aldo Simonelli (clarinet); Tina de Dario (bassoon); Robert Taylor (French horn). 2-12" discs in album (*CLASSICAL EDITIONS CD-2010) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: Blaserquartet, Op. 8, No. 2 (Stamitz); Cassazione in E-flat (Mozart); Blaserquintet, Op. 88, No. 2 (Reicha); Blaserquintet, Op. 67, No. 1 (Danzi).

Françaix: Quintette a Vent. One side, and **Nielsen: Quintet, Op. 43.** New Art Wind Quintet. 1-12" disc (*CLASSIC EDITIONS CE-2001) \$5.95.

The New Art Wind Quintet, formed for the purpose of furthering woodwind chamber music in America, is probably the most ideal instrument for its desire. The balance, precision and flexibility to perform, with equal success, both classical and modern works makes it virtually peerless.

The Mannheim School, made up of composers who were attracted to the court of the Elector of Palatine in Mannheim, contains some of the most significant talent of the immediate Pre-Classical period (early eighteenth century). The inclusion of the Mozart work owes to the fact that the then young Composer was somewhat influenced by this School. Perhaps the chief value of the recording is that instead of presenting art of the established musical giants, whose individuality blots out, partially, the qualities and exact forms of their ages, it presents the works of talented but lesser known composers who mirror more accurately the life, spirit, and musical status of their time.

The Nielsen-Françaix disc presents Nielsen at his finest and Françaix in an unusual mixture of impressionism and sophisticated jazz ranging in similarity from Gershwin to Stravinsky. C.

Ravel: Quartet in F. One side, and **Debussy: Quartet in G minor, Op. 10.** Budapest String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4668) \$5.45.

Columbia has taken its recordings of the Ravel and Debussy quartets by the Budapest Quartet, each of which was originally spread over two sides of a single LP disc (*C-ML-4091 and *C-ML-4018), and coupled them on one LP record. The musical results are just as good at a saving of one-half the

cost. We are very much in favor of this procedure and we are sure that our readers will also be quite happy about it. Perhaps the complaints that we have heard about spreading works over two sides that might have been placed on one have at last reached the ears of some of the record publishers.

CHORAL



Gregorian Chants (Vol. 1). Trappist Monks of a Cistercian Abbey and Benedictine Nuns Choir. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-569) \$5.95.

Gregorian Chants (Vol. 2). Monks of the Benedictine Abbey (En Calcat) with Boys' Choir from l'Alumnat. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-570) \$5.95.

It would seem that the recordings to be found on these two unusual discs were made in the various monasteries and are reputed to have been made during the regular devotions of the religious who dwell there. As one listens to them, one has a feeling that he is being given a glimpse of a way of life in addition to hearing very beautiful and inspiring music. In fact, he is likely to have the feeling that he is taking part in a deeply religious ceremony.

To us these recordings were much more than just studio recordings of Gregorian Chants. It may have been our imagination, but they seemed to be surrounded with a mystical atmosphere of a highly religious nature.

OPERA



Rossini: Il Barbiere de Siviglia (complete). (Sung in Italian). Mercedes Capsir (soprano); Dino Borgioli (tenor); Riccardo Stracciari (baritone); Supporting Cast, Chorus and Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 3-12" discs in album (*C-EL-1) \$10.10.

Verdi: Rigoletto (complete). (Sung in Italian). Mercedes Capsir (soprano); Dino Borgioli (tenor); Riccardo Stracciari (baritone); Supporting Cast, Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 2-12" discs in album (*C-EL-2) \$7.25.

The passage of years can do strange things to one's original impressions. On hearing these two re-issues of, primarily, the art of Riccardo Stracciari, one time Metropolitan stalwart and later a principal with the Chicago Opera Company, this reviewer was amazed. Earlier (fifteen to twenty years) impressions were that here were superior performances of the roles of Rigoletto and Figaro, but viewed (as it were) in the cold light of 1953 one is confronted with the melancholy fact that they are no more than ordinary.

To be sure, Stracciari was no longer young (he made his Metropolitan débüt in the season 1906/07) when these records were made. Nonetheless one

* indicates LP 88 1/3 rpm.
\$ indicates 45 rpm.

would at least expect the art to hold up despite the passing years, but not so; the performances are in no way exceptional. *Rigoletto* is presented with little imagination and, on several occasions the gulping and sobbing are in very questionable taste—the jester was a wicked man, but certainly Verdi did not conceive him as a maudlin figure. Others in the cast of this recording—with the exception of Mercedes Capsir, whose sparkling vocalization is still exciting—are run of the mill.

There is not much to commend *Commendatore Stracciari's Figaro*, either. Here again a lack of taste spoils what is essentially a real man—Rossini's *Figaro* is not just another operatic buffoon as he becomes here. Again it is Capsir who saves the performance from being completely bad.

These two re-issues may be justified from an historical angle, although even that is doubtful in this writer's mind. The quality of the recorded sound is poor (the original 78's date from the late Twenties or early Thirties), and thus, despite the very low prices, the prospective purchaser is advised to hear the sets before laying out his money. A libretto is included but none of the historical data on the recording and the artists which would have been interesting, is furnished. W.

"Of Gods and Demons." George London (bass-baritone) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4658) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Das Rheingold*—Abendlich strahlt der Sonne Auge (Wagner); *Die Walküre*—Wotan's Farewell & Magic Fire Music (Wagner); *Damnation of Faust*—Mephistopheles' Serenade (Berlioz); *Faust*—The Calf of Gold (Gounod); *Méfistofele*—Ecco il mondo (Boito); *The Demon*—Do not weep, my child (Rubinstein); *Song of the Flea* (Mousorgsky).

There is a growing tendency on the part of record companies to give fancy names (in the same manner as a collection of essays) to the assembled items on an LP disc. Thus we have "New Year's Day Concerts;" "Ballet and Bizet" (a particularly inept effort, incidentally); and now a fanciful *Of Gods and Demons*. The "god" in this case is our old friend Wotan in a notable excerpt from *Das Rheingold*. This is followed by the more familiar finale to *Die Walküre*. Both are very impressively sung, for George London is the possessor of a rich basso-cantante that he uses with taste and intelligence.

Less happy interpretively, although still very well sung, are the excerpts from *La Damnation de Faust*, *Méfistofele* and *Faust*. These three famous operatic devils require, for their proper and convincing projection, in addition to a flexibility of temperament, a lightness of touch that London does not yet possess. In addition, he is tangling horns (literally and figuratively) with some of the greatest singers of all time who have preserved their versions of the music—Plançon, Journet, and Chaliapin (among

the older ones) and Panzera, Neri and Christoff in this present generation. One is glad to note the use of the chorus in the Berlioz and Gounod numbers.

The recording of all but the Rubenstein excerpt is very good. This last, recorded in this country, seems small and far away by comparison with the rest. Columbia, as usual, has supplied the absolute minimum as regards notes and comment. W.

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor—Scena della pazzia (Act II). (Sung in Italian). One side, and **Thomas: Hamlet**—Scène de Folie (Act IV). (Sung in French). Mado Robin (soprano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Richard Blareau. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-676) \$4.95.

Mad scenes used to be a veritable passion with the older operatic composers—Donizetti and Bellini are two who come to mind—but there were others, notably Ambroise Thomas, who supplied at least one of the more famous *Scènes de Folie*. The reason for the numerous mad scenes is not hard to find—there were singers in the old days (i.e., early and middle 19th century) who had magnificent voices and such scenes gave them an opportunity to vocalize all over the place, as it were, without anyone bothering too much—they were *supposed* to be crazy!

Nowadays there are not so many gifted singers, and all mad scenes, with the exception of the classic in *Lucia di Lammermoor* are viewed very dimly. Mlle. Mado Robin, the possessor of a remarkably pure and agile coloratura soprano, essays with considerable success two of these scenes, replete with all the vocal acrobatics, and battles the orchestra's first flutist to a draw.

Mado Robin is undoubtedly one of the better coloraturas singing today, and she works her way through both pieces in an manner that leaves no room for adverse criticism. Production, pitch and technique are good, accurate and musical. She is accompanied by the Paris Conservatory Orchestra under Richard Blareau, who obviously understands his role in the proceedings, and his work is *sans peur et sans reproche*.

This is obviously a record for admirers of florid singing; it is supplied here, full measure, pressed down and running over. Copious notes are supplied, as is good recording.

Handel: Giulio Cesare (complete). (Sung in Italian). Soloists, Akademiechor and Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-8012) \$11.90.

Information regarding the operas of Handel is rather sparse. They have been considered virtually unsingable, at least in their original keys, for some time, and this difficulty, coupled with their essentially static nature (*opera seria*), have kept them from the modern stage. First produced in February of 1724, *Giulio Cesare* was a resounding success and

remained popular for over fifty years. A truncated modern version was given in New York (1944) with more than passing success, and the music was then described as "deeply moving and incessantly interesting."

It is a pity that Vox did not see fit to give some details on this recorded performance, such as who arranged the music, what transpositions were made and other facts that would aid the listener's understanding of, and consequently his pleasure in, the really wonderful score.

Be that as it may, here is a first recording of an opera very few, if any of us ever expected to hear. In the title role (this one obviously transposed) is Otto Weiner. He sings well, with exceptionally clear diction and the dramatic recitations are particularly well delivered. As Cleopatra, Elisabeth Roon exhibits her clear light soprano to good advantage and the wonderful aria *V'adoro, pupille* comes off very well indeed. Phil Curzon is the Tolomeo and Herbert Handt the Sextus. Both prove more than adequate.

Dr. Hans Swarowsky directs a performance that has purpose and style. His choice of *tempi* is unusually just, and there is an air of conviction about the entire production. The recording is first-rate and the text is furnished, although there are certain deviations from it that are somewhat confusing. W.

Operatic Choruses. Chorus of the Würtemberg State Theatre and Würtemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4056) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Fidelio*—Prisoners' Chorus (Beethoven); *Rienzi*—Chorus of the Messengers of Peace (Wagner); *Der Freischütz*—Chorus of Huntsmen; Chorus of Bridesmaids (Weber).

The excellent chorus of the Würtemberg State Theatre sings these choral operatic selections in a most acceptable manner. They have been well recorded, and this disc is a fine value at its modest price.

"Melba." Patrice Munsel (soprano) with orchestra and chorus, taken from the sound track of the motion picture, "Melba." 3-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-7012) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7012) \$4.67.

CONTENTS: *Roméo et Juliette*—*Je veux vivre dans ce Rêve* (Gounod); *Il Barbiere di Seviglia*—*Una voce poco fa* (Rossini); *Le Nozze di Figaro*—*Voi che sapete* (Mozart); *Daughter of the Regiment*—*Chacun le sait* (Donizetti); *La Tosca*—*Vissi d'arte* (Puccini); *La Traviata*—*Libiamo, libiamo* (Verdi); *Ave Maria* (Bach-Gounod); *Home, Sweet Home* (Payne-Bishop); *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges*, Op. 34, No. 2 (Mendelssohn); *Lucia di Lammermoor*—*Il dolce suono mi colpo di sua voce* ("Mad Scene") (Donizetti).

Whether you have seen "Melba" on the screen

* indicates LP 33 1/2 rpm.
g indicates 45 rpm.

or not, there is no reason why you should not enjoy Miss Munsel's singing of the many famous selections to be found on the present LP disc. These recordings were taken from the sound track of the film. We do not claim that they are as good as if they were individual studio recordings, but we found them highly satisfactory and do not hesitate to recommend them.

VOCAL



"The Triumphes of Oriana" (Collection of 32 Madrigals dedicated to Queen Elizabeth I, edited by Thomas Morley). The Randolph Singers conducted by David Randolph. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-212) \$11.90.

In this extraordinary album, *The Triumphes of Oriana*, Westminster has made available an admirable cross-section of the work of the leading Elizabethan composers. Represented are Thomas Morley, Weelkes, Wilbye, Tomkins, Pilkington and Vautour as well as a host of lesser known writers such as Ellis Gibbons (the elder brother of the famous Orlando), Bateson, Greaves, Farmer, Hilton, Robert Jones and others. There are four famous composers of the time not represented—Byrd, Orlando Gibbons, Farnaby and Dowland.

The Triumphes of Oriana was originally published in 1601 and was edited by Thomas Morley; the purpose was to honor Queen Elizabeth. The work consisted of twenty-five madrigals but this recording, comprising some 323 pages of music, includes in addition to the original twenty-five, seven other madrigals received too late for publication in the original volume. The enterprising conductor of the singing group, David Randolph, is responsible for the first complete collection of Oriana madrigals, for it was he who discovered the existence of the other works and tracked them down.

With such an embarrassment of riches it is difficult to give a clear picture of the delights of this set. There is Morley, the musical incarnation of the spirit of "Merrie England," wholesome and breezy; and Thomas Weelkes, the closest of all the English madrigalists to the Italians, who is represented by the incomparable *As Vesta was from Latmos Hill descending*. And what of John Wilbye, perhaps the finest of all English madrigalists, whose dazzling brilliance and sheer perfection of workmanship are unique? Or Thomas Tomkins, the daring and powerful harmonist? Lack of space unfortunately precludes further discussion, but be assured that the general level of inspiration is very high.

The Randolph Singers are a group of six excellent voices that have been welded into an artistic entity at once musically and scholarly. Their work is characterized by a precision and tonal accuracy that does full justice to the work at hand.

As is usual with this paragon of recording com-

panies, there are notes on the collection, texts and informative notes on each madrigal, plus pictures of the performing artists. The album itself is an extremely attractive one and, since the recording is of a superior order, the set can be recommended without reserve.

W.

Mozart: Motet, K. 165 ("Exsultate jubilate").

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind, with George Thalben-Ball (organ). One side, and **Mozart: Il Re Pastore**—L'Amerò, sarò costante. And **Mozart: Die Entführung aus dem Serail**—Welcher Kummer (recit.); Traurigkeit ward mir zum Lose (aria). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. And **Mozart: Warnung, K. 433**. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4649) \$5.45.

Last month a Mozart Recital by Hilde Gueden was issued by London and it contained several of the items recorded here. The wonderful motet *Exsultate jubilate* was the principal work there, as here, and while the recording on the present disc is more acceptable (there was blasting on the London record) the singing is not nearly as good. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf has a large voice, a dramatic soprano in fact and, because of this, she achieves a heaviness of sound that is unbecoming. The joyousness is far too restrained here, and there is a lack of spirit that may be due, in part, to the Schwarzkopf temperament; but some of it may also be accounted for by the nature of her voice, exceptionally fine as it is (for other music).

The same strictures apply to the excerpts from *Il Re Pastore* and *Die Entführung*, both of which require a lighter touch and more flexibility to be really convincing. The song *Warnung* is, perhaps, the most successful, but it only lasts a little under three minutes.

And speaking of time, recorded time that is, the London disc referred to above was a ten-inch affair and contained as much, if not more, than this twelve inch Columbia! And if that were not all, one strongly suspects this Mozart Recital of being dubbed from 78 rpm records, although no mention is made of such a procedure. There is some suspicious surface noise on occasion, but the over-all quality of recorded sound is not too bad.

The disc, however, must be listed among the poorer offerings of the year both artistically and monetarily.

W.

Schubert: Rosamunde, Op. 26 (complete). Hilde Roessel-Majdan (contralto), Vienna Akademiechor and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5182) \$5.95.

The music Franz Schubert wrote for Helmina von Chézy's "drama," *Rosamunde, Princess of Cypress*,

consists of ten assorted entr'actes, melodies, choruses but no overture—and thereby hangs a tale. According to an (unreliable) contemporary account, the overture used on the occasion of the first performance was that written for another unsuccessful play *Alfonso and Estrella*. Dr. Alfred Einstein believes that the overture used was that for the opera *Zauberharfe*—the one now popularly known as the *Rosamunde* overture. In all events, Westminster and Dean Dixon use the *Alfonso and Estrella* piece thus spoiling the set for at least one listener, for this overture is a rather dull affair when compared with the utterly delightful *Zauberharfe*.

Nevertheless, the balance of the music, most of which will be new to present day music lovers, is a delight from beginning to end. The lovely Romanze *Der Vollmond strahlt* is exquisitely sung by Hilde Roessel-Majdan, and the choruses are performed in sterling fashion by the indefatigable Akademiechor.

Dean Dixon, the gifted American Negro conductor, does a superior job with the lovely melodic music. His grasp of the style and his unerring beat are such as to make the disc a welcome addition to any collection. His tempi are sane, unhurried and essentially correct. The Vienna State Opera Orchestra plays in inspired fashion, and Westminster has come up with another fine engineering job.

If it were not for the substitution of the *Alfonso and Estrella* overture for the *Zauberharfe*, the set would be, in this reviewer's opinion, virtually perfect. The omitted overture is one of Schubert's real gems.

W.

Recital of Bach and Handel Arias. Kathleen Ferrier (contralto) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-688) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mass in B minor*—Qui sedes ad dextram patris, misere nobis; *St. Matthew Passion*—Grief for sin rends the guilty heart within; *St. John Passion*—All is fulfilled, and hope to fainting souls extended; *Mass in B minor*—Agnus, Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, misere nobis (Bach). *Samson*—Return, O God of hosts; *Messiah*—O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion; *Judas Maccabaeus*—Father of Heaven; *Messiah*—He was despised and rejected of men (Handel).

In a record of unusual interest, both musical and vocal, Kathleen Ferrier presents four arias of Bach's and an equal number by his great contemporary, Handel. Much, if not all, of this material has been recorded before, but never so sumptuously as here. In addition to the excellent soloist, the services of a first rank conductor (Sir Adrian Boult) and a fine orchestra (the London Philharmonic) are enlisted, making the offering deluxe indeed.

Miss Ferrier, whose golden contralto has never sounded better, was obviously in fine voice for these recordings; the listening experience is a rewarding one. Beginning with the moving *Qui sedes as dextram*

patris from the "B minor Mass," the disc moves on to excerpts from the *St. Matthew Passion* and the *St. John Passion* and the first side closes with an excellently projected and memorable performance of the *Agnus Dei* from the "Mass in B minor."

The second side of the disc is devoted to two *Messiah* excerpts handsomely sung and two lesser known, but none the less great arias from *Samson* and *Judas Maccabaeus*. In this more Italianate music Miss Ferrier is equally at home, handling the difficult coloratura passages with ease and style.

Sir Adrian Boult and the London Philharmonic Orchestra cover themselves with glory and provide accompaniments that are the acme of good taste and musicianship. London's engineers supply a first class recording job, and comprehensive notes are furnished on the jacket.

W.

Schlusnus Sings (Vol. 5). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9624) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Venetianisches Gondellied*, *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges* (Mendelssohn); *O komm' im Traum* (Liszt); *Das Erkennen, Der Nöck* (Loewe); *Talismane*, *Die Beiden Grenadiere*, *Romanze* (Schumann); *Ständchen*, *Der Blumenbrief*, *An die Musik* (Schubert).

Decca is continuing with its important project of making Schlusnus recordings available on LP. Those who have enjoyed the earlier releases in this series will doubtless welcome this new one. Heinrich Schlusnus' art is something that deserves the widest possible exploitation.

Chansons de Paris. Mira Jozelle with orchestra conducted by Ben Ludlow. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3006) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: *Je suis belle, cheri*; *Ciel de Paris*; *La fiancée du prestidigitateur*; *Hymne à l'amour*; *Sur la route*; *France dimanche*; *L'Amour est parti*; *Le loup, la biche et le chevalier*.

Mademoiselle from Armentières. Line Renaud with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*VX-VL-3190) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Mademoiselle from Armentières*; *Tes yeux bleus*; *Son cœur est amoureux*; *Le soir*; *Tire, tire l'aiguille*; *Bouquette*; *Un oiseau chante*; *Frou-frou*.

Paris je t'aime. Maurice Chevalier with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*VX-VL-3180) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Paris je t'aime*; *Trinque, trinque*; *Une canne et un casquette*; *Ah, si vous savez*; *Moi . . . j'ai gardé*; *La chasse*; *Le telegramme*; *Peut être*.

The three LP discs listed above should help to satisfy the constant demand for recordings of popular French songs—the sort of ditties that one hears in the night clubs of the French capital. As these three singers have had great success in this particular field, we are very sure that their record-

ings will prove to be highly satisfactory—on this side of the Atlantic we would say that they are certainly in the groove . . . We might mention that the Westminster disc (*WEST-WL-3006) has become a favorite of hi-fi fans because of its extremely wide range characteristics.

Offenbach: *Orphée aux Enfers* (abridged). One side, and **Offenbach:** *La Belle Hélène* (abridged). (Sung in French). Soloists, Paris Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Rene Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-51) \$5.95.

Offenbach: *La Vie Parisienne* (abridged). (Sung in French). Soloists and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-21000) \$5.95.

Offenbach fans will surely be pleased with these excellent recordings of abridged versions of several of this famous comic opera composer's best known works. All of the singers have been bred in the tradition of the Parisian musical theatre, and in these recordings they have had the benefit of able direction and the support of fine orchestras. We have nothing but praise for the performances and the reproduction.

Romberg: *The Desert Song* (abridged). Nelson Eddy (baritone) with supporting cast, chorus and orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4636) \$5.45.

Fine, spirited singing of Romberg's beautiful melodies, which seem as fresh as the day they were written twenty-seven years ago. We welcome Nelson Eddy's return to records after too long an absence; Columbia's engineers have accorded their best efforts to this disc, and we predict huge sales for it.

PIANO



Chopin: *Andante Spianato and Grande Polonaise Brillante* in E-flat, Op. 22. One side, and **Chopin:** *Variations on "La ci darem la mano,"* Op. 2. Pro Musica Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Rolf Reinhardt (piano). And **Chopin:** *Variations Brillantes on "Je vends des scapulaires" of Hérold*, Op. 12. Rolf Reinhardt (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7530) \$5.95.

We have listed this LP disc under PIANO because the piano is by far more important than the insignificant orchestral accompaniments that Chopin has supplied for two of the three selections it contains. The *Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise Brillante* is usually heard without the slight orchestral accompaniment that the composer wrote for the Polonaise section of this work. The "La ci darem la mano" Variations, written when Chopin was but seventeen years of age, although it is the first work to bring attention to the young composer, is seldom heard these days. It was composed for piano and

orchestra, but here again the orchestral part adds little to the work as a whole. If it were not for the brilliance of the piano variations this early piece would have been forgotten long ago. As it is it is primarily of historic interest. The gay display piece based on a theme from "Ludovic" by the French operatic composer Louis-Joseph-Ferdinand Hérold is another work which is of more interest historically than musically.

To come to the point—the present disc will be of particular importance to those students of Chopin who would like to have Opus 22 played as it was originally written and would also like to have recordings of two other works that are seldom heard and are not likely to be recorded again in the near future.

We would say that Rolf Reinhardt has supplied satisfactory performances and that the reproduction is acceptable.

Spanish Piano Music. Jesús Mariá Sanromá (piano). 1-12" disc (*PLM-PRLP-1011) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (4) *Pièces Espagnoles* ("Aragonesa" "Cubana," "Montañesa," "Andaluza") (Falla); *El Amor Brujo*—Ritual Fire Dance (Falla); *Niñerias* (Suite for Piano) (Turnia).

Spanish Piano Music. George Copeland (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3025) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Cantos de España*—Córdoba (Albeniz); *España*—Tango in D (Albeniz); *Danza de la Hoguera* (Pittaluga); *Cadena de Valses*—Serenata, Homenaje a la Jota (Nin); *Pochades Andalouses*—Tientos (Infante); *Cants Magics* (Mompou); *Impresiones íntimas*—Planys (Mompou); *Canc I Dansa* No. 1 (Mompou); *Juergas*—Murciana (Laparra); *El Amor Brujo*—Danse (Falla); *Sacro-monte* (Turnia); *Danzas Españolas*—La Playera (Granados).

Piano Music of Villa Lobos. Ellen Ballon (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-531) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *A lenda do Caboclo*; *Vamos afraz da serra calunga*; *N'esta rua, n'esta rua*; *O Polichinelo*; *Dansa do indio branco*; *Plantio do Caboclo*; *Festa no sertao*.

These three LP discs contain a wealth of keyboard music in the Spanish idiom, all played by able performers and well recorded. The surface of the M-G-M disc is not as quiet as we would like to have it. Better listen to this one before purchasing it.

Mozart: Sonata in D, K. 381. One side, and **Mozart: Sonata in B-flat, K. 358.** Vitya Vronsky and Victor Babin (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4667) \$5.45.

Vronsky and Babin give delightful performances of these two sonatas for piano (four hands), which Mozart wrote in his teens for his sister, Nannerl, and himself. They are light and melodious and should have a wide appeal for those who appreciate the better things in the literature for piano duos.

Hindemith: Sonata for Two Pianos, 1938. Josef and Grete Dichler (pianos). One side, and **Martin**—arr. Ansermet: **Ballade for Flute.** Kamillo Wanansell (flute) with Collegium Musicum Orchestra conducted by Kurt Rapf. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1037) \$4.

Of particular interest on this little LP disc is the recording of the Hindemith *Sonata for Two Pianos*, 1938. This recording was made by Cook Laboratories (Stamford, Conn.) in the studio of the Bosendorfer piano factory in Vienna. Two perfectly matched thirteen-foot Bosendorfer concert grand pianos were used—pianos that are kept in the studio as reference instruments for comparison with new pianos as they are produced. The results obtained by the Cook technicians are outstanding. Here is a recording that high fidelity fans may use to show off the quality of their reproducing instruments.

Chopin: (12) Etudes. Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-704) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Etudes* No. 10 in A-flat, Op. 10, No. 1; No. 19 in C-sharp minor, Op. 25, No. 7; No. 18 in G-sharp minor, Op. 25, No. 6; No. 20 in D-flat, Op. 25, No. 8; No. 21 in G-flat, Op. 25, No. 9; No. 5 in G-flat, Op. 10, No. 5; No. 13 in A-flat, Op. 25, No. 1; No. 14 in F minor, Op. 25, No. 2; No. 15 in F, Op. 25, No. 3; No. 8 in F, Op. 10, No. 8; No. 2 in A minor, Op. 10, No. 2; No. 23 in A minor, Op. 25, No. 11.

Chopin: (4) Ballades. Ginette Doyen (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5169) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Ballades* in G minor, Op. 23; A minor, Op. 38; A-flat, Op. 47; F minor, Op. 52.

Chopin: (11) Mazurkas. Guiomar Noväes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7920) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mazurkas* in D, Op. 33, No. 2; C-sharp minor, Op. 41, No. 1; B minor, Op. 33, No. 4; A minor, Op. 17, No. 4; B-flat minor, Op. 24, No. 4; C, Op. 56, No. 2; A minor, Op. 59, No. 1; C, Op. 33, No. 3; B, Op. 63, No. 1; A-flat, Op. 59, No. 2; C, Op. 24, No. 2.

A Chopin Recital. Guiomar Noväes (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7810) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Scherzo* No. 3 in C-sharp minor, Op. 39; *Berceuse*, Op. 57; *Waltz* No. 6 in D-flat, Op. 64, No. 1 ("Minute"); *Impromptu* No. 2 in F-sharp, Op. 36; *Etude* No. 3 in E, Op. 10; *Nocturne* No. 5 in F-sharp, Op. 15; *Fantaisie* in F minor, Op. 49.

Most music lovers are familiar with the recordings of the well established pianists Wilhelm Backhaus and Guiomar Noväes and will know what to expect when these distinguished artists turn their attention to Chopin. However, the French pianist, Ginette Doyen, while well known in Europe, the British Isles and Africa because of her several concert tours, is

practically unknown on this side of the Atlantic. Miss Doyen is a graduate of the Conservatoire National de Paris and has appeared with the following famous French orchestras: Pasdeloup, Concerts Colonne, Lamoureux and National de Paris. She is steeped in the romantic French tradition, as the poetic style of her playing indicates. As we listened to her recordings we immediately thought of Cortot. Her playing is marked by extreme accuracy and delicate refinement. We found it utterly fascinating. Westminster has supplied the best of piano reproduction.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106 ("Hammerklavier"). One and one-half sides, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 26 in E-flat, Op. 81a** ("Les Adieux"). Solomon (piano). 4-7" discs in box (6V-WDM-1733) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1733) \$5.72.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 13 in E-flat, Op. 27, No. 1 and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 19 in G minor, Op. 49, No. 1.** One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27, No. 2** ("Moonlight") and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 20 in G, Op. 49, No. 2.** Wilhelm Backhaus (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-705) \$5.95.

Solomon offers thrilling performances of two of Beethoven's most popular piano sonatas showing this pianist's great virtuosity . . . Backhaus continues with his recordings of the Beethoven sonatas displaying that profound technique in the German tradition that has made him a favorite of discerning music lovers on both sides of the Atlantic for over fifty years.

VIOLIN



Bartók: Sonata for Violin Solo. Wandy Tworak (violin). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-711) \$4.95.

Bartók: Sonata for Violin Solo. Robert Mann (violin). One side, and **Bartók: Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.** Robert Mann (violin), Stanley Drucker (clarinet), Leonid Hambro (piano). 1-12" disc (*BARTOK BRS-916) \$5.95.

Frequently considered the finest work in the form since Bach, the Bartók Sonata has received two satisfactory and one poor recording. The one we do not consider highly is performed by Robert Mann, first violinist of the Juilliard Quartet. Mr. Mann emphasizes only the stringent and dissonant elements of Bartók, failing to convey the Hungarian flavor which forms the basis of the composer's art, and consequently misses the point of that art which rests with its synthesis of authentic folk music and classical forms. To glean an idea of the correct manner of performing Bartók, one need only listen to his own recordings, and compare them with duplicate recordings of the same works; one discovers that the warmth Bartók conceives for his compositions has been replaced by a nervous abstract quality quite foreign

to his apparent intention. Many performances, therefore, that are paraded as definitive (in frequent instances executed by those who personally knew Bartók) are as removed from authenticity as are most attempts to reproduce Medieval music.

When the Menuhin version of the Bartók Sonata was issued (TNR Apr. '50) (*V-LM-1087), we stated that it was "probably . . . as fine a rendition as (the Sonata) will ever get." Those who may have this version in their libraries may be well satisfied that theirs is an outstanding interpretation—especially in view of the fact that the Sonata was dedicated to Menuhin. However, Wandy Tworak achieves a rare balance of thematic and formal elements, making his offering superior (in our judgment) and one of the few fully satisfactory recordings of the late composer's work. C.



ORGAN

Organ Music of César Franck. Clarence Watters, playing the organ at Trinity College Chapel, Hartford (Conn.). 2-12" discs in album (*CLASSIC CE-1007) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: Choral No. 1 in E; Choral No. 2 in B minor; Choral No. 3 in A minor; Prière.

Organ Music of César Franck (Vol. II). Clarence Watters, playing the organ at Trinity College Chapel, Hartford (Conn.). 1-12" disc in box (*CLASSIC CE-1015) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Fantasie; Cantabile; Pièce Héroïque; Andantino.

In the April 1953 issue of TNR we reviewed a set titled "French Baroque Organ Music" played by Clarence Watters and recorded by Classic. This was about the best organ recording we had heard until Robert Noehren's Audiophile discs came along. The present discs played by Watters duplicate some of the Noehren records, as far as the three great Franck Chorals are concerned. Watters, a recognized authority on French organ music, plays these works in a more conventional tempo than Noehren, generally on the faster side. His performances are masterful and, if different, the equal of Noehren's. But what comes from the records in the way of organ sound is something else. Trinity College Chapel and its large organ are not captured with the exceptional clarity that made Noehren's records so outstanding. We would recommend the Noehren set over this on the basis of reproduction alone.

Watters enjoys clearer reproduction in Vol. II; the full organ passages in the Pièce Héroïque are quite thrilling. Again Watters plays admirably and the organ has many registers of great beauty. All of the Watters discs have more atmosphere than the Noehren discs, placing the listener in the nave rather than close to the organ in the chancel. We would like to hear some more of the Watters records using the organ of St. John's Church which were

so successful in the Baroque music referred to at the beginning of this article. Classic Editions will eventually issue the complete organ works of Franck played by Watters, in what will be one of the greatest organ recording projects of our time, a survey of the French school of organ composition.

S.

Percussion and Pedal (Vol. III). Reginald Foort, playing the Wurlitzer organ of the Richmond (Va.) Mosque. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1052) \$4.

CONTENTS: *The Clock Factory, Nightmare in the Mosque, Dust Storm* (Foort); *La Gioconda—Dance of the Hours (finale)* (Ponchielli); *St. Louis Blues* (Handy); *Stars and Stripes Forever* (Sousa).

The Theatre Organ (Vol. IV). Reginald Foort, playing the Wurlitzer organ of the Richmond (Va.) Mosque. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1053) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Scherzo in E minor* (Mendelssohn); *To the Spring* (Grieg); *Lohengrin—Prelude to Act III* (Wagner); *In a Monastery Garden* (Ketelby); *Light Cavalry Overture* (Suppé); *Wine, Women and Song* (Strauss); *Il Trovatore—Anvil Chorus* (Verdi)

Hi-fi fans have been clamoring for more SOT records of the great Wurlitzer organ at the Mosque in Richmond, Va., played by "Michael Cheshire." We put "Michael Cheshire" in quotes because when the first recordings were made his true identity could not be divulged because of certain contractual commitments. Several of our readers wanted to know more about Michael Cheshire; they recognized a great virtuoso but could not understand how so brilliant an artist could escape widespread recognition. We can now tell them that "Michael Cheshire" is the distinguished English organist, Reginald Foort, who is known all over the world because of his many outstanding recordings.

Of course, these two new Sounds of Our Times (SOT) records by Mr. Foort are designed primarily for Hi-fi fans. If your instrument can reproduce everything that is on these two discs, you have a truly "high fidelity" phonograph.

Organ Encores. Richard Ellsasser (organ). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3031) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Oh, Moon of My Delight; Le Coucou; The Lost Chord; Flight of the Bumble Bee; Hansel and Gretel—Children's Prayer; Will o' the Wisp; Londonderry Air; Concert Study in D minor; Humoresque: L'Organo Primitivo; Recreation on "Turkey in the Straw"; Chorale-Prelude on an English Lullabye.*

The distinguished young organist, Richard Ellsasser, has turned his attention to a series of well-known and much beloved selections and has recorded them using a Hammond electric organ. The present disc is not of any great musical value, but it contains much delightful music if you care to relax and let

the pleasing melodies come to you. Reproduction—excellent.



HARPSICHORD

D. Scarlatti: Sonatas for Harpsichord (Vol. IV). Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5186) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Sonatas in D, L. 463; E minor, L. 321; G, L. 209; G minor, L. 386; G, L. 388; A minor, L. 136; D, L. 418; G, L. 103; C, L. 205; F, L. 381; F minor, L. 475; E, L. 323.*

In his fourth volume Fernando Valenti presents another dozen of the brilliantly varied, and pyrotechnically unique sonatas which form almost the total surviving works of Domenico Scarlatti. Valenti's playing, like some incalculably varied line, follows the multi-hued life of these miniature dramas with a sensitivity and understanding that is almost endlessly remarkable.

DICTION



Through Childhood to the Throne. A record of the eventful years preceding the coronation of Her Majesty, Elizabeth II. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1770) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1770) \$5.72.

This unique documentary recording covers the period of the life of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, from her birth on 21 April 1926 until her broadcast to her peoples on Christmas Day, 1952. It was devised, written and produced by Brian George. The narrator is John Snagge.

It includes recordings of broadcasts of many important historic events in which are heard the voices of members of the royal family, leading English statesmen and many outstanding world figures. These recordings have been nicely tied together with appropriate remarks by the narrator. As recorded on the present LP disc it becomes a smoothly running story of the life and times of the present Queen of England.

Eliot: Selected Poems. T. S. Eliot (reading). 1-12" disc (*HARVARD-L-6002/3) \$6.50.

CONTENTS: *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock; Gerontion; The Hollow Men; Triumphal March; Journey of the Magi; A Song for Simeon; Difficulties of a Statesman; Fragment of an Agon.*

Owing to the relatively free syntactical structure of much of his poetry and to the fact that the structural arrangement of words and lines is significant both to the sound and metrical patterns and to the logic of it, the availability of Eliot's recitation of some of his poems is indispensable to those who would most fully appreciate those works. Made over a period of twenty-one years, this collection reveals the poet's voice in an unexpectedly interesting variety of conditions.

"The Lord is My Shepherd." Eugene Kern (reader), with musical accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*NOT-ABLE 2323) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Psalms 23, 39, 104, 15, 37, 49, 137, 8, 139, 1.

The Psalms listed above are beautifully and reverently read by the distinguished actor, writer and director, Eugene Kern. An unobtrusive musical background of organ music, selected from the works of Bach, adds very much to the effectiveness of this fine recording. The texts of the Psalms are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

Adlai Stevenson Speaks. Edited and Narrated by James Fleming. 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1769) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1769) \$5.72.

This recording is intended for those who would like to have some highlights of the various speeches made by the former Democratic nominee for the presidency, Adlai Stevenson. Recorded excerpts from his major campaign speeches have been selected and nicely arranged with an appropriate narration by the distinguished NBC news commentator, James Fleming.

BAND

Marches. Deutschmeister Band conducted by Julius Hermann. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3003) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Radetzky March (J. Strauss); Die Bosniaken Kommen; Philippovits March; Schoenfeld March; Auersperg March; 84th Regiment March; Vindobona March; Andreas Hofer March; Castaldo March.

It has been a long time since we have had a new record by a military band and the present one comes all the way from Vienna. It contains a series of marches that were popular during the reign of the old monarchy before World War I. These are played with fine spirit by the famous Deutschmeister Kapelle, founded in 1741.

MISCELLANEOUS

Fiesta Flamenca. Carlos Montoya (guitar) with instrumental accompaniment. 1-10" disc (*SOT-1027) \$4.

This record is a hi-fi fan's dream come true! Finger snapping, hand clapping, guitar strumming, dancing, castanet clicking, shouting—transient after fabulous transient snap through this half hour of rhythmic excitement. The music of this spontaneous Spanish "jam session" is filled with the most dazzling array of hi-fi sounds probably ever put on a disc. It will make an ordinary phonograph sound remarkably realistic, and on a truly fine instrument one has virtually to roll back the rugs to make room for the performers. Ole!

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Coloseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Deca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

• indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

MORE and more persons are finding phonograph records a great help in learning a foreign language. Recently there has come to our attention an unique record in this field. It is a 12-inch LP disc entitled "Journey in French." The playing time of this LP record is 47 minutes and this time is divided into nine dialogues between a Frenchman and his wife (Jacques and Françoise) and an American and his wife (Dick and Nancy) who have come to Paris for a visit. Jacques and Françoise take Dick and Nancy on a personally conducted tour of Paris—to the Nôtre Dame cathedral, the Sorbonne, to a restaurant, to a fashionable shop, etc. In the course of the tour they discuss in French literally everything under the Paris sun—food, wine, architecture, sports, art, fashion, tipping, cafe life, etc. Continually Jacques and Françoise help their American friends with their French, pointing out their mistakes and suggesting the proper idiom. Thus the listener hears conversational French as it is spoken with humor and realism. By following the dialogues with the printed French text (with accompanying English translation), one will learn common, useful French phrases and their conversational contexts.

Those persons who have gained a fair knowledge of textbook French in high school or college can easily bring it alive by listening to the present record. They may take their stilted textbook French and convert it into the realistic conversation that one hears on the boulevards of the French capital.

As we see it, this is the purpose of this unusual record. It will be of little value to anyone who has not had at least two years of French in school. It is in no sense a short course for learning French. The price of "Journey in French" is \$4.95. If your local dealer cannot supply this disc, orders sent to

the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

* * *

STOP PRESS! Just as we were about to go to press, one of the most important recordings ever to be made arrived from England. It is the complete Coronation Service of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, which took place in Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953. The recording was made from the B.B.C. broadcast by direct wire to H.M.V.'s recording studio and begins with a spoken introduction by the Archbishop of Canterbury and ends with the singing of National Anthem as the Queen leaves the cathedral.

The recording has been most faithfully achieved; there is very little extraneous noise, and the music which is so much a part of the service has been caught with rare fidelity. It is a great joy to have this great service on three LP discs and not cut up into innumerable short sections as was the coronation of her father on 78 rpm discs. With this set of records there is supplied an excellent explanatory booklet prepared by the Rev. Edward C. Ratcliff, Ely Professor of Divinity in Cambridge University.

As only a limited number of these sets are available, those interested should place their orders without delay. The price of this set of three 12-inch LP discs (manual sequence only) including the booklet is \$21.90 (postpaid within U. S. A.)

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U. S. A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent

recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning August 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Puccini: *La Tosca* (highlights). Simona Dall'Argine (soprano); Nino Scattolini (tenor); Scipio Columbo (baritone); Vienna Kammerchor and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera—Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5208) \$5.95. (TNR Mar. '52).

Bantock: *Fifine at the Fair*. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1026) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '51).

Wagner: *Die Götterdämmerung*—Siegfried's Rhine Journey; Siegfried's Funeral March. And Wagner: *Tristan und Isolde*—Prelude to Act III. And Wagner: *Siegfried Idyll*. And Wagner: *Tannhäuser*—Introduction to Act III. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris—Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4680) \$5.45. (TNR July '42, Feb. '40, Aug. '39, & Mar. '39).

Bloch: *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra*. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris—Münch. One side, and Bloch: *Baal Shem*. Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Andor Farkas (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4679) \$5.45. (TNR Oct. '39 & Mar. '41).

Handel: *Concerto Grosso No. 5 in D, Op. 6, No. 5*. London Philharmonic Orchestra—Weingartner. One side, and Handel: *Concerto Grosso No. 6 in G minor, Op. 6, No. 6*. London Symphony Orchestra—Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4676) \$5.45. (TNR Oct. '39 & Jan. '40).

Mozart: *Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543*. One side, and Mozart: *Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550*. London Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4674) \$5.45. (TNR July '41 & Mar. '38).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Berlioz: *Roman Carnival Overture*. One side, and Suppé: *Light Cavalry*—Overture. Philadelphia "Pops" conducted by Alexander Hilsberg. 1-10" disc (*C-AA-34) \$2.85.

Wagner: *Tannhäuser*—Overture. Württemberg State Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and Wagner: *A Faust Overture*. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Rieger. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4061) \$2.50.

Strauss: *Kaiserwalzer in C, Op. 437* ("Emperor Waltz"). Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and Strauss: *Morgenblätter* ("Morning Papers Waltz"). RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4062) \$2.50.

Rossini: *Tancredi*—Overture. RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. And Glinka: *Russlan and Ludmilla*—Overture. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One side, and Verdi: *Nabucco*—Overture. RIAS Symphony Orchestra (Berlin) conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. And R. Strauss: *Ariadne auf Naxos*—Overture. Württemberg State Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4063) \$2.50.

Mozart: *March and Fandango*. Bavarian Radio Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. And Dohnányi: *Der Schleier der Pierrette*—Wedding Waltz. Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. One side, and *Waldeufel*: *España* Waltz. And Hellmesberger: *Dance of the Devils*. Munich Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Edmund Nick. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4064) \$2.50.

ORCHESTRA

Beethoven—orch. Weingartner: *Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106* ("Hammerklavier"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4675) \$5.45.

Beethoven—orch. Weingartner: *Sonata No. 29 in B-flat, Op. 106* ("Hammerklavier"). Bavarian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Kurt Graunke. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7089) \$5.45.

Beethoven's great Opus 106 Sonata, the *Hammerklavier*, has always posed a series of almost insurmountable problems for the pianist. The difficulties were realized by the composer himself for, contrary to his usual insistence on strict adherence to his instructions, Beethoven wrote a friend, regarding this sonata, that "here was a piece that would give the pianist something to do" and goes on to say that the performer could change the order of the movements in order to make the work more understandable.

It was because of these many problems that Felix Weingartner decided to orchestrate the sonata. Now it must be understood that his work was no mere exercise in orchestration—on the contrary it is the serious work of an understanding and intelligent musician. The resultant composition is an orchestral masterpiece, a "Tenth" symphony if you will. Weingartner has, to all intents and purposes, put the Opus 106 into playable form as a hearing of any of the recorded piano versions will demonstrate conclusively. This, one realizes, is a controversial remark, and should not be construed as a blanket approval of orchestration of Beethoven's or any other composer's piano music. Rather, it is the exception that proves the rule.

The two recordings of this monumental work now available on LP offer interesting contrasts. Columbia has re-issued Weingartner's original recording. Technically a fine one in its day, it now shows its age



in this year of grace, 1953. *Urania's*, however, is a top-notch up-to-date job. A comparison of the two versions, by movements, is also extremely edifying. Weingartner's reading of the first movement has fire, is fast in tempo while Graunke's is more deliberate and creates a sense of power, of massiveness that is very persuasive. The ironical *scherzo* is treated in about the same fashion by both conductors with Graunke being a little more bitter, Weingartner more brittle. Not much to choose here. The crowning glory of the sonata, the magnificent *adagio sostenuto*, is played by both men in virtually the same manner; it is inspired and moving music in both instances. After this, the final *largo—allegro risoluto* always seemed anti-climactic but Graunke, because of the clarity achieved by *Urania's* engineers, makes the fugue hang together better than Weingartner's does.

Regretfully, then, for this reviewer has always admired the old Columbia version, the palm must be handed to the *Urania* recording on the basis of sheer sound. That Graunke's performance is as good as Weingartner's is one of those fortuitous circumstances for which one can only be very thankful.

W.

Vaughan Williams: A Pastoral Symphony. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-721) \$5.95.

Britten: Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge, Op. 10. One side, and **Warlock: Capriol Suite.** Boyd Neel String Orchestra conducted by Boyd Neel. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-801) \$5.95.

All of this music appears for the first time on LP discs; the symphony, for the first time at any speed. Both discs are part of London's "Special Commemorative Coronation Release." The symphony is Williams' third, first performed in 1922. It is the least played of his symphonies because it is a quiet work all the way through. This contemplative music is not pictorial, but rather it is absolute music that progresses from logical thinking and not by impressionism. It is one of the composer's most powerful and personal utterances, a strong work which just happens not to have many fortissimo climaxes. The modal, peaceful mood of the music produces a vision of landscape as seen from afar, rather than any sharply drawn picture. There is some activity in the third movement and some sonorous passages, although the rhythm does not become too agitated. The finale opens with a long beatless and wordless recitative for a solo soprano over a soft drum-roll, and the work closes with a shortened version of the soprano solo, this time accompanied only by a single octave A high on muted violins.

Sir Adrian Boult, who gave us a fine recording of Williams' *London Symphony*, leads his admirable London Philharmonic Orchestra, of which he is permanent conductor, in a beautiful reading of this rather mystical music. Knowing Boult's music making, we would say he adheres faithfully to the score,

and one can be quite certain that this performance is an accurate statement of the music. The reproduction is very fine. Those who have appreciated Vaughan Williams' other works will find this one well worth investigating.

The Britten and Warlock works are of a different nature entirely. They are light essays, cleverly written, and entertaining in a sophisticated, classical manner. Each is a skillful work that sustains interest. Britten's variations are a virtuoso demonstration in this form for a composer of twenty-three. Boyd Neel and his fine string orchestra perform these scores with a firm conviction and the results are up to his usual high standard; London's quality of string tone is pleasing.

S.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 1 in F, Op. 10. State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6014) \$5.95.

While not wishing to drool unnecessarily over things Soviet, facts are facts, and in a traditionally democratic manner, we must admit that this recording is really something exceptional, Soviet or not. It is not only one of the most vital performances of this great score we ever heard, but it is also magnificently played by the orchestra and recorded with a fidelity the equal of anything we have heard. We must give this disc our highest recommendation in every sense of the word.

Shostakovich's *First Symphony* may have been controversial at one time, but it is no longer a shocker—it is just a brilliant and exhilarating symphony which with the passing years becomes increasingly more important. Composed in 1925 when Shostakovich was nineteen, this work was his first major score. It will undoubtedly take its place in the repertoire of symphonic works with the greatest creations in that form. Shostakovich's *Fifth* is pretty much in the same class. We believe that the majority of today's music lovers can enjoy this work, and if you have not become familiar with it, this disc will be played as often as any, once it becomes part of your library.

Only two other recordings exist of this work, one by Stokowski, who gave the work its American premiere, and one by Rodzinski. The Rodzinski performance is the only other LP version. While it is an admirable reading and a good reproduction, it is not the equal of this new one. There is greater intensity and less rushing forward in the Kondrashin reading; it is a bit more expansive, but it never gets thick or draggy. The quality of reproduction from U.S.S.R. has rapidly and steadily improved, as noted in these columns during the past year, and with this disc, taped in Russia and processed over here, they have equalled today's standard anywhere. With the improved reproduction, we can hear the excellence of the State Orchestra, and it is a first class group with marvelous precision. More Shostakovich symphonies recorded in this manner would be valuable additions to the LP catalogs.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 4 in B-flat, Op. 60.
Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty.
1-12" disc (*C-RL-3034) \$2.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 7 in A, Op. 92. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera.
1-12" disc (*C-RL-3035) \$2.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 47.
One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543.** Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3068) \$2.98.

Columbia's offerings on the low-priced "Entré" series are of more than passing interest in the case of these three. We will dispose of the Beethoven *Fourth* first because it will be of interest primarily to those admirers of the late Hamilton Harty, of Handel's *Water Music* fame and a generally admirable conductor of his day. However, this set is at least twenty years old, and Columbia has an even better bargain package in their regular full-priced line: Walter and the New York Philharmonic doing the Beethoven *Fourth* and *Second*, both on one 12" LP, which obviously beats the value of this "Entré" disc, to say nothing of better reproduction. The amazing thing about this Hamilton Harty disc is how well it does sound for its age. The over-all effect is more pleasing than some of the super-strident, shrill jobs of today; but it is not in a class with even the average of today's recordings. As a performance it is good, although not good enough to take precedence over a newer one.

The balance of the offerings, Beethoven's *Fifth* and *Seventh* and the Mozart *Symphony No. 39*, are all superlative jobs. Galliera has a fine snap and precision in his *Seventh*, with a wonderful pace and drive, and all of it under firm control. We were quite impressed with this reading, not expecting anything as fine as this. The Philharmonia plays with beautiful finish, and Galliera's reading is straightforward, with a perfect balance between tautness and relaxation.

Von Karajan is enjoying one of his better moments in both of the works he directs here. This is a fine Beethoven *Fifth*, with great intensity and solid orchestral playing. It has many magnificent moments and is not marred by interpretive excesses. The Mozart is a shade heavy, but this particular one can stand it, and the result is most satisfying. All of these are recent recordings, within the past two or three years, and are examples of good reproduction. S.

R. Strauss: Aus Italien, Op. 16. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother.
1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7087) \$5.95.

Aus Italien is a symphonic fantasia, the first of Strauss' orchestral tone poems. It is in four movements, with the second and fourth constructed along

sonata lines, and has been called a symphony by some. It is the first work in which Strauss, brought up on classical methods, broke away and began to think for himself, a result which has been felt in orchestral composition ever since.

At the age of twenty-two Strauss visited Italy, spending much time in Naples and Rome, enjoying the scenic beauty, historical landmarks, and the bright, gay life of that land. As with other composers, Strauss was inspired by his visit, and the inspiration was poured into a major orchestral canvas. The last movement of this work is based on the familiar song *Funiculi, funicula*, which is given a treatment of great abandon and rather daring flights of imagination. The public was mindful of this new musical form and the large orchestra (and extravagant scoring) employed by Strauss, and their greeting was a mixed one. Any opposition did not, fortunately, discourage Strauss—his mind was made up, and he was happy to have discovered a new direction in music. *Macbeth*, *Don Juan*, and *Tod und Verklärung* which followed proved him right. Two weeks after the first performance in Munich, Strauss wrote to Hans von Bülow, asking him to accept the dedication of his *Italian Fantasia* as a "little token of my great gratitude." Von Bülow, who usually declined such honors, accepted with unequalled enthusiasm the dedication of "this Symphonic Fantasia decorated by local opposition."

The four movements are entitled: On the Campagna, Amid Rome's Ruins, On the Shore of Sorrento, and Neapolitan Folk Life. There is much to admire in the music; many who find the later tone poems too ornate would enjoy this work, which deserves more of a hearing than it gets. Rother and his orchestra offer a fine performance of the work which is excellently recorded. S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 7 ("Song of the Night").
Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-211) \$11.90.

Mahler: Symphony No. 7 ("Song of the Night").
Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Hans Rosbaud. 2-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-405) \$9.70.

There is little comparison between these two recordings. Scherchen so clearly outperforms Rosbaud that he runs away with the honors in every respect. Westminster's victory is even more complete for they have better orchestral playing and far better reproduction. Whether you listen to the first two minutes or whether you play them both all the way through, the results are the same. In fact, Rosbaud's version is rather boring, for he plods along with dull recording pulling him down even more. Scherchen's treatment keeps things moving along in an interesting fashion, and he has a knack of making this sprawling score hang together.

The *Seventh* is a long work which finds Mahler

in a mood which has led this symphony to be called his "romantic," such as Bruckner's *Fourth*. This work takes leave from the purely subjective, auto-biographical style of the earlier works. It is still a descriptive piece of writing, and is a bizarre and satirical work which alternates capriciously in mood. The five movements present an intriguing structure. The outer movements frame the three middle movements. But the three middle movements have a peculiar form in themselves. The second and fourth movements are called *Nachtmusik*, and they surround the third movement *Scherzo*. These three middle movements alternate between the lyric and the grotesque, with unexpected outbursts following the sweetest passages. Among the baffling aspects of this work is the key signature. It is sometimes called the Symphony in E minor and sometimes the Symphony in B minor; but the name "Song of the Night" is a charming title which fits it well considering the two movements called *Nachtmusik*. The use of guitar and mandolin in the fourth movement gives that *Night Music* a wonderful effect, original with Mahler. There is much in the *Seventh* that is fascinating, and we can recommend Scherchen's recording as something to interest the more curious and enterprising music lover as well as the devoted Mahlerites.

S.

CONCERTO



Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 2 in G, Op. 44. Margot Pinter (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7081) \$5.95.

Khachaturian: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.

Margot Pinter (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7086) \$5.95.

Margot Pinter is a pianist new to us. She is a good artist, sincere and rather free of interpretive mannerisms. If there were no other recorded versions of these works with which to compare the present discs, we would probably give both these works a high rating. Such is not the case, for in the Tchaikovsky, there exists a recent recording by Mewton-Wood with the Winterthur Orchestra under Walter Goehr (*CH-CHS-1125), which is mighty stiff competition. It has a lot more drive and virtuoso flourish than the Pinter recording, qualities which this work can well accommodate. The music may not have the immediate popular appeal of the well worn *First Concerto*, but it is a pity that it does not get at least a tenth of the concert performances of the *First*, for the *Second* has many lovely melodies and much fine workmanship (for that matter, so does Tchaikovsky's *Third Concerto*, another brilliant and interesting work well done by Mewton-Wood on LP). We would prefer the Mewton-Wood as a performance, both soloist and accompaniment, and

as a more forward reproduction.

The Khachaturian *Piano Concerto* is enjoying a substantial popularity which seems to be growing with the years. The LP recordings now number five. The best of them is still, to our ears, Levant and Mitropoulos (*C-ML-4288) which we reviewed in March, 1950. From the very opening measures there is a conviction that is contagious, and a rapport between soloist and conductor which is perfect. Levant begins the work more pompously than Pinter; it is marked *Allegro Maestoso*, and that is how he plays it. In the first and third movements, Levant has a definition and clarity that exceed all other recorded performances. Columbia's reproduction is notably better than the present *Urania*, in every respect; better percussion, better piano tone—closer and brighter, and better balance. The Pinter reading is a good and a valid one, but it is just not in the same league as Levant and is barely equal to Kapell or Lympamy. For this work we still recommend Levant's disc above all others.

S.

Vivaldi: Concerto in E minor for Violoncello and Strings. And Couperin—arr. Bazelaire: *Pièces en Concert for Violoncello and Strings*. One side, and Boccherini: *Concerto in B-flat for Violoncello and Orchestra*. Pierre Fournier (violincello) with the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra conducted by Karl Münchinger. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-687) \$5.95.

'Cello Recital. Pierre Fournier (violincello) accompanied by Ernest Lush (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-700) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Chorale ("Herzlich tut mich Verlangen") (Bach); Sonata in G (Bach); Nigun (from "Baal Shem") (Bloch); Chanson Louis XIII and Pavane (Kreisler); Beau Soir (Debussy-Heifetz); Fileuse, Op. 80, No. 2 (Fauré); Prelude No. 2 (Gershwin); Granadina (Nin).

Unlike most 'cellists whose bowing sounds like a runner's breathing after the 100 yard dash, Pierre Fournier possess an unusual and almost uniquely mellifluous tone which, combined with his supremely cultivated musicianship indicates immediately, that he is one of the very few good 'cellists one may hear today. His is the quiet drama, the variety which is calculated to last and not to expire after a few sensational exhibitions. He does not strive, particularly, for authenticity (as in the cases of the Vivaldi, Boccherini and Haydn concerti), but rather strives to express what he performs in terms of his own technique; and to be convincing at that sort of approach, a basically interpretive one, requires a highly controlled talent.

The majority of his "'Cello Recital" consists of works not intended for that instrument, but in no instance, if one did not know the origins of the works, would there probably be any doubt that they were all 'cello masterpieces. His version of the Bach *Sonata*, when compared with Casals's, leaves

the impression that where Casals is playing the 'cello, Fournier is playing the Sonata. The same impression is acquired from other comparisons we have made, which is not so much a depreciation of other 'cellists, as an indictment of the rarity of the kind of playing which Fournier exhibits on his first major LP releases.

C.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15. Paul Badura-Skoda (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5209) \$5.95.

The second in order of composition (of the great five), but the first to be published, this concerto is considered to be closer in style to Mozart than anything else Beethoven ever wrote. It could not be called imitation, but the style and feeling are often present. It is an extension of Mozart's writing and is clearly Beethoven. The problem of interpretation in the *First Concerto* is usually mindful of this Mozartian style. The idea is carried out well by Giesecking (*C-ML-4307), a recording which has been admired and preferred in these columns. The present disc by Badura-Skoda leans much more to the style of Beethoven playing which we would find in the later concertos. Scherchen sees it this way too. There is a maximum of weight from both soloist and orchestra throughout the performance, but we would not call it heavy-handed nor inappropriate. Badura-Skoda does better by this concerto than either of the other two he has committed to discs (*Fourth* and *Fifth*), although his *Fourth* was quite good. He is perfectly agile, with a rippling technique and the requisite power where necessary. Scherchen provides a fine accompaniment and elicits some nicely turned phrases from the orchestra. The performance is well integrated, and each movement is carefully wrought. We would recommend it as the best of all the LP's available.

S.

Khachaturian: Concerto for Violoncello and Orchestra (1946). Sviatoslav Knushevitsky (violoncello) with the USSR State Orchestra conducted by Alexander Gauk. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6009) \$5.95.

While most of us have greatly enjoyed Khachaturian's *Gayne*, *Masquerade*, and *Piano Concerto*, many have labeled these works with banality. The *Violin Concerto* is considered by some a little long and mushy in substance. We now have a concerto for another instrument, and in this 'cello concerto Khachaturian has produced a work of definite appeal, as well as another work of magnificent Armenian color. The characteristics of Armenian folk music are tightly woven throughout the entire work. Built on solid classical forms, this work presumably does not use actual folk melodies; but all the themes have the style and feeling of typical Armenian melody. This national spirit is an inseparable part of Khacha-

turian's art and lends a fresh and original quality to his work; it makes his music distinctive. As in his other works mentioned above, there seems to be no political connections; it is just honestly built on the musical heritage of his native land.

The cover notes for this disc give an understandably detailed description of the three movements, and they point up the use of Armenian melody and the folk and dance-like tunes which Khachaturian employs. The writing for the solo instrument is brilliant, full of technical difficulties for virtuoso display, and always interesting to hear. The orchestral part is important and beautifully scored. We would say this is a fine work for 'cello and a worthy addition to the concerto repertoire for that instrument. You will find it an absorbing work well worth hearing, especially if you have enjoyed other works by this composer. It is splendidly performed by the artist to whom the work is dedicated. The accompanying orchestra is fine and the reproduction brilliant. This work, by the way, is but 34 minutes long, and each side of this 12" LP has just 17 minutes of music on it.

S.

MacDowell: Concerto No. 1 in A minor, Op. 15. One side, and **MacDowell: Concerto No. 2 in D minor, Op. 23.** Vivian Rivkin (piano) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5190) \$5.95.

It seems we just finished reviewing the MacDowell *Concerto No. 2* (TNR, May 1953) played by Sanroma and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra under Hanson (*C-ML-4638), and now we have another version. A third LP of this work is also in the catalogs, by Jenner and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under Swoboda (*CH-CHS-1137). Admirable as Miss Rivkin's reading may be, it lacks the stature of either the Sanroma or Jenner recordings. It has good reproduction, less metallic than Sanroma, similar to Jenner. We believe some MacDowell authorities may well consider this the best of the lot, for Miss Rivkin has fine technical accuracy, and a warm, romantic feeling for the music, but for our taste it lacks vitality.

However one may appraise the performance of the *Second Concerto*, it must be admitted that the second side of this disc is inferior to either the Columbia or Concert Hall discs. Columbia pairs Hanson's *Symphony No. 2* ("Romantic") and Concert Hall offers MacDowell's *Woodland Sketches* played by Artur Balsam, either and both of which have more to say than MacDowell's *Concerto No. 1*. This work is not in the same class as his *Second*. It is a weak, affair of rather uninteresting thematic material; much of it sounds like piano etudes, and we were bored with it. Miss Rivkin strives valiantly to make something out of it and Dixon supplies a careful and enthusiastic accompaniment. This is its first recording and will probably be its last.

S.



CHAMBER MUSIC

Marais: Suite No. 4 in A minor. One side, and
Marais: Suite No. 5 in A. Ernst Victor Wolff
 (harpsichord) and Eva Heinetz (viola da gamba).
 1-12" disc (*EMS-8) \$5.95.

Fux, Banchieri, Gesualdo, Solar, Farnaby, Charpentier, and Marais, all important pre-classical composers, have, after extensive phonographic neglect, received, within the last month or two, sudden and substantial representation on records; all of which we consider a wise and gratifying trend. Marais is our particular concern here, and even a cursory hearing of his works reveals a noteworthy talent, as opposed to one in which our interest is basically historical. One feels about him, as one does about Couperin, that his music reflects indelibly what has come to be known as the French spirit.

These Suites are played, as is always the custom on EMS records, on the most authentic instruments. And, it must be said, that the performances of Mr. Wolff and Miss Heinetz match the suitability of those instruments.

C.

Tchaikovsky: Quartet No. 1 in D, Op. 11. One side, and **Borodin:** Quartet No. 2 in D. Hollywood String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8187) \$4.98.

This disc contains two of the most popular string quartets written by Russian composers. Tchaikovsky's is famous for its second movement "Andante Cantabile" and the Borodin opus will be remembered for its beautiful third movement "Notturno." There are other LP recordings of these works but none the equal of the fine performances one will find upon the present disc.

Baroque Music. Harpsichord Quartet: Claude Monet (flute); Harry Shulman (oboe); Bernard Greenhouse (violincello); Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-517) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (5) *Canzoni per Sonar* (Frescobaldi); *Sonata No. 2 in E minor* (Rosenmüller); *Le Parnasse ou L'Apothéose de Corelli* (Couperin).

Hovhannes: Quartet for Flute, Oboe, Violoncello, Harpsichord. Harpsichord Quartet. And **Lessard:** Toccata in Four Movements. One side, and **Thomson:** Sonata No. 4. And **Rieti:** Sonata all' Antica. Sylvia Marlowe (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*NEW EDITIONS NE-3) \$5.95.

On the Esoteric disc the Harpsichord Quartet makes its debut on records and it is a most valuable addition to the phonographic honors list. Its performance of Baroque music maintains such responsiveness to the art with which it is dealing that it may be said to be able to do for the music of that period what the Pro Musica Antiqua is doing for the music of the Medieval and Renaissance times.

The Quartet plays only the very short Hovhannes

work on the New Editions record, the major portion of that recording being occupied by Sylvia Marlowe, who is justly praised as "one of the most brilliant executants of our time." This is the first extensive recording of the solo harpsichord performing 20th century works, and the results make this an indispensable disc for lovers of the instrument which, probably above all others, combines in perfect fashion both purity and flexibility. The significant and unusual tonal and dramatic qualities achieved are strong justification for the renaissance of this instrument.

C.

R. Strauss: Suite in B-flat, Op. 4. One side, and

R. Strauss: Serenade in E-flat, Op. 7. Vienna Philharmonic Wind Group. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5185) \$5.95.

These earlier works of Richard Strauss (composed before he was 21 years of age) are of more historical interest than musical value. They show the young composer's interest in various instruments, which interest doubtless flowered into his later great flair for orchestration. The present two selections for wind instruments (flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, contra bassoons and horns) are pleasing enough to listen to but will be of real interest only to students of the music of that outstanding German composer who largely dominated the musical scene of his native land from the 1890's until his recent death in 1949.

Schubert: Quartet No. 14 in D minor ("Der Tod und das Mädchen"). Hungarian Quartet. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1152) \$5.95.

Schubert: Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99. Jean Fourrier (violin), Antonio Janigro (violincello) and Paul Badura-Skoda (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5188) \$5.95.

Schubert: Octet in F, Op. 166. Chamber Music Ensemble of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9669) \$5.85.

There are numerous LP recordings of these popular Schubert chamber works already in the catalog, but we want our readers to know that the present versions are available. We found these three discs all quite satisfactory. We were particularly impressed with Westminster disc containing the Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99.

CHORAL



Bach: St. Matthew Passion (excerpts). (Sung in German). Orchestra and Chorus of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2070) \$5.95.

Bach's *Passion According to St. Matthew* has been accorded two "complete" LP recordings. As one might expect of a work of such scope, perfect or ideal performances are not the order of the day. This statement is not meant in any snide fashion—

ideal performances of any major work are few and far between. By the same token abridged or truncated versions of lengthy works are open to criticism. Who can decide what to delete, what to include? In very few instances are "stream-lined" versions of longer works satisfactory.

Consequently, it is a real pleasure to come across a disc that intelligently makes no attempt at abridgement (despite the Schwann catalog's listing of this record as such). As a matter of fact, the present recording is solely designed to introduce the listener to one of the three main media of the *St. Matthew Passion* (the other two are the aria and the recitative). Thus the record contains seven *chorales*, three double *choruses*, including the opening and closing ones and the *choral-fantasia* which forms the finale to Part I of the *Passion*. That is all, for it was not considered feasible nor proper to include the choral parts that intensify the drama, the outbursts of terror or disdain or the mocking choruses.

Mogens Wöldike's conception of this moving music is an enchanting one. His intentions are to present the music with "some of the simplicity and unpretentiousness which must have characterized the early performances." No attempt is made to dramatize or "interpret"—the music is sung in such a way "that a congregation could easily join in, as was expected of it in the 18th century."

This performance, then, by the Orchestra and Chorus of the Danish State Radio, is unique and will not please those who look for monumental effects and masses of sound. It will please all those who have an open mind and who are willing to be led back to the early years of the 18th century when this matchless music was first heard.

Superior recording, scholarly and readable notes plus the complete texts round off another Haydn Society triumph.

W.

Bach: Cantata No. 1 ("Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 19** ("Es erhub sich ein Streit"). (Sung in German). Gunhild Weber (soprano); Helmut Krebs (tenor); Hermann Schey (bass); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9671) \$5.85.

Bach: Cantata No. 39 ("Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brod"). One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 79** ("Gott, der Herr, ist Sonn' und Schild"). (Sung in German). Gunhild Weber (soprano); Lore Fischer (alto); Hermann Schey (bass); Berlin Motet Choir; Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9672) \$5.85.

Four Bach *Cantatas*, three of them new to records, enliven this month's lists. All four are performed by essentially the same artists and are, in general, distinguished—at times elegant—performances.

Cantata No. 1 "Wie schön leuchtet," despite the

low numbering (this is the *Bach Gesellschaft* system), is a work of the mature Bach and was written for the Feast of the Annunciation. It is a joyous and serene work as befits the subject matter. *Cantata No. 19* "Es erhub sich ein Streit" is a somewhat earlier piece and is the first work of this nature to be written to a text by the now famous "Picander" (Christian Friedrich Henrici). It is a Michaelmas cantata and contains some very fascinating passages depicting the struggle between the Archangel Michael and the dragon. *Cantatas No. 39* "Brich dem Hungrigen dein Brod" and *No. 79* "Gott, derr Herr" are equally fine. The former is a special work for a Thanksgiving Service of welcome for some eighteen hundred persons driven, because of war, from their homes in Salzburg. The latter is a companion piece to the more famous *Cantata No. 80* "Ein Feste Burg" and, like it, was written for the Reformation Festival.

The soloists are, in every respect, first rate artists, excellently equipped vocally and temperamentally for the music. Briefly one may say that Krebs has a very pleasant tenor voice that is used well, Gunhild Weber is a lyric soprano of merit, Lore Fischer an alto of considerable charm and the veteran Schey sings with distinction. The accompanying orchestra, members of the Berlin Philharmonic, are superb, and the use of old instruments and a baroque organ lend a quaint, archaic air to the proceedings that is utterly disarming. Then, too, Fritz Lehmann's relaxed direction and the accurate, expressive singing of the Berlin Motet Choir are just what the music requires. These two discs are indeed valuable additions to the swelling list of recorded performances of the Bach *Cantatas*.

Superior notes and top flight recording assure the purchaser of a maximum amount of listening enjoyment.

W.

A Festival of Choral Music. Choral Chamber Group of Pamplona conducted by Luis Morondo. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5195) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *O vos omnes* (Victoria); *Quedito basito que dureme* (Hidalgo); *Campanas* (Senfl); *Dureme Pequinin, La Campana, Pobre Corazon* (Reboud); *Ribernas* (Remacha); *Venerabil's barba cappuccinorum* (Donosti); (3) *Canciones y un pregón* (anon.); *El Perro de Aguas, Mozuela* (Do Vital); *Husar Gentil* (Matyas Seber); *Alborada* (Ledesma); *Triste Recuerdo* (Massa).

Really good news seldom makes the headlines of our daily papers. This is, of course, as regrettable as it is expected. Thus it remains for **THE NEW RECORDS** to announce this disc, issued by Westminster. The good news is not so much concerned with the music (which is none the less very fine) as it is with the music makers.

The Choral Chamber Group of Pamplona is an ensemble of sixteen amateurs (secretaries, clerks, etc. in their daily lives) that is directed by an insur-

ance company employee! And, what is even more astonishing, they intend to remain amateurs and insist on earning their living in non-musical fields. Thus they do not make any extended tours, and only on their collective vacations are they able to make quick trips to Wales, France and Germany. That such a group of dedicated people exists is, in itself, very good news; that they sing in such an astonishingly fine manner is an added dividend.

The program on this disc was recorded during an actual performance in the abbey Royaumont, France. The music, some of it folk material, is all by composers about whom, with the exception of Victoria and Senfl, this reviewer has never heard. The opening piece, Victoria's *O vos omnes*, is a classic and is sung to perfection. Throughout the disc one is constantly surprised by the accurate dynamics, the control, the phrasing and, above all, the high purpose of the group. Luis Morondo is a man to be reckoned with, and his choral group is a superb aggregation.

The quality of the singing reminded this reviewer of the old *Orfeo Català* records but, of course, with the more advanced recording techniques available today the present group surpasses the older one by a wide margin insofar as sound is concerned. Yet the "extra-musical" characteristics of both ensembles are very similar.

Fine recording; but Westminster, usually so meticulous about such matters, has not furnished any notes worthy of the name. W.

Vaughan Williams: Mass in G minor. One side, and **Rubbra: Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici.** Fleet Street Choir conducted by T. B. Lawrence. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-805) \$5.95.

In a "special commemorative Coronation release" London issues a first recording of two ecclesiastical works by British composers. The first, a *Mass in G minor* by Ralph Vaughan Williams, dates from 1922, while the other, *Missa in Honorem Sancti Dominici* by Edmund Rubbra (1901-) was composed in 1948. Both are written in accordance with Pius X's *Motu Proprio*, which states, among other things, that "the liturgical text must be sung without alteration or inversion of words, without undue repetition and always in a manner intelligible to the faithful. . . . It is not lawful to keep the priest waiting on account of the music." Thus both *Masses* are intended for actual Church use, either in the Roman Communion or in the Anglican.

Vaughan Williams' work is, musically, one of his most characteristic utterances, showing the influence of the Tudor composers; but, as is always the case with a good musician, the influences have been thoroughly assimilated and turned to original uses. The *Mass in G minor* is an austere work, remote and plain and, despite its relatively modern origin, full of sixteenth century atmosphere.

Dr. Rubbra's effort is equally severe, but it lacks

the inspiration and poetry of his one-time teacher's. It is terse, eminently suited for church use, for there is no repetition, nothing to hold up the movement of the ritual.

The Fleet Street Choir, founded (and directed here) by the late T. B. Lawrence, is a superior organization; they sing with precision and excellent tonal quality. The un-named soloists in the Vaughan Williams piece are adequate but not exceptional.

London has given both works fine recording, and there are notes, somewhat technical analyses that will please the specialist but leave the average music lover cold. W.

Stravinsky: Symphonie des Psaumes. RIAS Chamber and Boys' Choir, St. Hedwig's Cathedral Choir, RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7526) \$3.85.

This recording contains an agglomeration of shouting and whispering and therefore conveys little of the cogency of the music that has been called "the most important religious work of the 20th century." As the best recording of this work available we would recommend the one conducted by the composer (*C-ML-4129) (TNR Apr. '49).

VOCAL

Lieder of Beethoven, Schubert and Schumann. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. 4-7" in box (øV-WHMV-1046) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1046) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *An die ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 (Beethoven). *Ständchen*; *Das Fischermädchen*; *Der Erlkönig*, Op. 1; *Nacht und Träume*, Op. 43, No. 2; *Du bist die Ruh'*, Op. 59, No. 3; *Der Atlas*; *Am Meer*; *Der Doppelgänger* (Schubert). *Mondnacht*, Op. 39; *Die beiden Grenadiere*, Op. 49, No. 1 (Schumann).

Considerable publicity has attended the various recordings made by the young (b. 1925) German baritone, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. Great names have been freely evoked (Hüsch and Schlusnus by one reviewer) and thus, it was with interest that one greeted this HMV disc that contains much that has been recorded before and includes material that makes many demands, both technically and artistically—in short, a dangerous program.

Fischer-Dieskau's previously released recordings in this country consisted, in the main, of his work in a series of Bach Cantatas (issued by Decca) and a really good performance of Brahms' *Vier ernste Gesänge*. Thus it came as something of a shock to hear the Beethoven song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* sung in such an exaggerated and labored fashion. Fischer-Dieskau's absurd choice of tempi (lugubriously slow) and his mannered and misplaced emphases make the recording one to be avoided at all costs.

Unfortunately things do not improve in the Schubert and Schumann *lieder*, even the thrice familiar *Serenade* has a strange sound about it, and the wonderful *Nacht und Träume* misses fire completely. Misplaced, almost amateurish "dramatics" mar the superb music of *Der Erlkönig* and *Der Doppelgänger* as well.

The record, as can be gathered from the above, is a disappointment, particularly in view of Fischer-Dieskau's essentially fine voice. One can only sincerely hope that some time soon the singer's artistry will catch up with his technical ability.

Absurdly inadequate notes and no texts complete one of the year's most ineffective offerings. W.

Lieder of Mozart and Richard Strauss. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-699) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Das Veilchen*, K. 476; *Abendempfindung*, K. 523; *Dans un bois solitaire*, K. 308; *An Chloë*, K. 524 (Mozart). *Morgen*, Op. 27, No. 4; *Ständchen*, Op. 17, No. 2; *Traum durch die Dämmerung*, Op. 29, No. 1; *Zueignung*, Op. 10, No. 1; *Freundliche Vision*, Op. 48, No. 1 (R. Strauss).

A Recital of 17th and 18th Century Music. Suzanne Danco (soprano) accompanied by Jeanne Demessieux (organ) and Guido Agosti (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-698) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Eile mich, Gott, zu retten* (Schütz); *Bist du bei mir* (Bach); *Warum betrübst du dich* (Bach); *Komm, süsser Tod* (Bach); *Paride ed Elena*—O del mio dolce ardor (Gluck); *La donna ancora è fedele*—Se Florina è fedele (A. Scarlatti); *Come raggio del sol* (Caldára); *Danza, danza* (Durante); *Amarilli, mia bella* (Caccini).

The art of Suzanne Danco is constantly being revealed in its many facets via London recordings. Here are two discs that demonstrate anew, if that were necessary, that Mlle. Danco is a superior singer, one whose understanding of the various musical styles is at once comprehensive and inclusive.

The first disc is devoted to *lieder* of Mozart and Strauss. Now Mozart, beyond a doubt the most gifted of composers, never wrote many songs and never spent much time or effort on the form. Despite this, several of the songs recorded here are real gems, giving an inkling of what might have been, had Mozart really devoted himself to song writing. In all events, these examples of Mozart *lieder* are exquisitely sung—particularly delightful are the charming *Dans un bois solitaire* and the wonderful *Das Veilchen*, which is really not a song at all but an operatic *scena* in miniature. Strauss' songs are represented by the more popular ones, and deservedly so. Such *lieder* as *Traum durch die Dämmerung* and *Morgen* rank among the best, and Miss Danco sings them with understanding and taste.

It is a considerable jump, both in time and style, to Schütz, Caldára and Caccini, and Mlle. Danco makes the necessary vocal and stylistic changes like

the true artist she is. It is in such songs and arias as these that one notes the extreme purity of her tones, the essential musicality of her voice. These old compositions are not for the inexperienced singer—they require an intangible quality that can be best described, for want of a better phrase, as vocal dignity, that comes only with experience.

London has supplied good notes on the music but, unfortunately, did not see fit to furnish the texts. Good recorded sound. W.

Classical Arias. Gérard Souzay (baritone) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Robert Cornman. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-730) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Mentre ti lascio, o figlia*, K. 513 (Mozart); *Il Sedia*—Caldo sangue (Scarlatti, A.); *Alceste*—Air de Caron (Lully); *Cadmus et Hermione*—Air de Cadmus (Lully); *Les Pèlerins de la Macque*—C'est un torrent impétueux (Gluck); *Castor et Pollux*—Nature amour (Rameau).

Schubert Recital. Gérard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-655) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: *Der Jüngling und der Tod*; *Der Jüngling an der Quelle*; *Der Wanderer an der Mond*; *Ihr Bild*; *Liebesbotschaft*; *Der Schiffer*; *Ganymed*; *Erster Verlust*; *Die Forelle*; *Nacht und Träume*.

The first of these two discs by the excellent French baritone, Gerard Souzay, is devoted to "classical arias" (i.e., Mozart, Scarlatti, Lully, Gluck and Rameau). Lumping together such different composers under the general heading "classical" is both dangerous and misleading. The Mozart piece is "classic" only in the use of a stilted, horrendous text, the music is vibrant and alive although its meaning and proper projection elude both M. Souzay and his conductor. The other music, being more conventional and on a lower artistic plane (*opera seria*), is less difficult since no amount of artistry could galvanize it into life. The various arias remain corpses, fascinating (if that is the proper word) as relics of a bygone era, but little more. Both soloist and conductor are happier in these latter pieces and the results are entertaining.

Of much more musical interest and artistic merit is the Schubert recital, wherein Gerard Souzay reveals his great natural gifts as a *lieder* singer. The selection of material is very good, too, being a happy choice between the familiar and the unfamiliar. All are superbly sung, and it is in the better known songs, such as *Die Forelle* and *Der Wanderer*, that Souzay rises to the occasion, for here competition, as it were, is keen, but he has nothing to fear—his singing of these songs can stand comparison with the very best. Particularly worthy of note is his exquisite and expressive singing of the autistic *Nacht und Träume*. Mlle. Bonneau's accompaniments fit like the proverbial glove and the disc deserves a wide

hearing. Texts and translations, albeit in London's "copyright" fine print, are supplied. W.

Old Italian Airs. Giacinto Prandelli (tenor) accompanied by Dick Marzollo (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7930) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Su, venite a consiglio* (Scarlatti); *Pur d'cesti, o bocca bella* (Lotti); *Vergine, tutto amor* (Durante); *Ah se tu dormi ancora* (Bassani); *Sebben, crudele* (Caldara); *Intorno all' idol mio* (Cesti); *Caro mio ben* (Giordani); *Sento nel core* (Scarlatti); *Paride ed Elena—Ol del mio dolce ardor* (Gluck); *Lasciar d'amarti* (Gasparini); *Che fiero costume* (Legrenzi); *Tre giorni son che Nina* (Per-golesi); *Vittoria, mio core!* (Carissimi).

Canzone Scordate ("Forgotten Songs"). Gerard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-731) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (7) Italian Monodies (1609-1634); (5) A. Scarlatti Songs (1659-1725); (4) Sacred Songs (1629-1700); (3) C. P. E. Bach Songs (1714-1788).

The many treasures of old Italian music are being brought forth these days in abundance, if not in all their glory, and at least one can recognize some of the grandeur of the extraordinary minds that called them into being.

Giacinto Prandelli, a tenor of more than passing musical intelligence, sings thirteen assorted arias with polish and accuracy. Some of the pieces will be familiar to phonophiles in recordings by Gigli (notably the *Sebben, crudele*; *Vergine, tutto amor*; and Carissimi's lovely *Vittoria, mio core* to mention but a few) and, while Prandelli has neither the vocal equipment nor the experience of his elder and more famous counterpart, he does not suffer unduly by comparison.

The chief criticism one can offer about this record (and also about the one reviewed below) is to deplore the use of a piano for the accompaniments. The use of a small chamber orchestra (or at least a harpsichord!) would be infinitely preferable. The piano is not only anachronistic, it detracts from the spirit and style of the music.

London's offering is one of the least successful in this field, and yet it could have been outstanding with a little care and imagination. To begin with, the seven Italian monodies are not identified. Careful reading of the notes, written by arranger Dorumsgaard, indicates that they are songs (or maybe arias) by Peri, Calestani, D'India, Caccini (2), Rontani and Falconeri—but one has to guess which band contains which, for the label merely reads "Seven Italian Monodies." (And, as Shakespeare tersely put it "We need no ghost come from the grave to tell us that!"). The four sacred songs are by Helder, Corner, Georg Bohm (one of J. S. Bach's teachers) and Daniel Vetter—all truly forgotten composers. C. P. E. Bach's songs, three of which finish out the

second side, are characteristic—that is, a little dull, scholarly and sincere.

Gerard Souzay sings the majority of the music with everything but the necessary touch of imagination that would lift the disc into the category of memorable. As it is, the almost complete lack of identification (despite the copious and strangely uninformative notes by Dorumsgaard—in exceedingly fine print, by the way) plus the absence of texts make the disc at once difficult and annoying. W.

Britten: (4) Songs. One side, and **Hindemith: (9) English Songs** (1942). Barbara Troxell (soprano) accompanied by Tibor Kozma (piano). 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-15) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *On this Island* (song cycle), *Fish in the Unruffled Lakes*, *Mother Comfort*, *Underneath the Abject Willow* (Britten); (9) English Songs (1942) (Hindemith)

One of the smaller recording companies who can always be counted on to issue records that have both musical and artistic merit is the WCFM Recording Corp. This, their fifteenth release, is no exception; the choice of material is unhackneyed, and the presentation is all anyone could ask for.

The Britten song cycle, a setting of five poems by W. H. Auden, is one of the better examples of song writing in the modern manner. This does not mean, however, that the music is cacophonous; on the contrary, there are an almost classic simplicity and a musical understatement that is very effective. The same characteristics are evident in the other songs and in the *Two Ballads* for two voices and piano. The idea of having Miss Troxell sing both parts is not too good for, despite the two sounds, it is still the same voice and some of the effectiveness of the ballads is lost.

The Hindemith items are settings of various English and American poets, ranging from William Blake and Thomas Moore to Shelly, Walt Whitman and Francis Thompson. The nine songs vary in musical texture and cover a wide range of emotional content from the dramatic *The Moon* to the charming *Echo*. Humor, not usually one of Hindemith's musical characteristics, is evident in *The Whistling Thief* and a certain mordant wit is noticeable in the subjective *On a Fly Drinking Out of His Cup*.

Miss Troxell exhibits considerable vocal mastery as well as a more than passing degree of imagination in handling the sometimes difficult material. The many divers moods are captured and projected with a sureness that speaks highly for Miss Troxell's musical intelligence. Vocally, of course, her accurately placed and well produced lyric soprano is always pleasant and adds charm and distinction to the songs. Tibor Kozma is always the able accompanist, seconding the soloist's efforts in a sure, but never aggressive, manner. Since none of this music has ever been recorded before the informative notes are a decided asset, as is the fine recording. W.

Beethoven: An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98. (Sung in German). Heinrich Schlusnus (baritone) accompanied by Sebastian Peschko (piano). One side, and **Brahms: (4) ernste Gesänge, Op. 121.** (Sung in German). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau (baritone) accompanied by Hertha Klust (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9668) \$5.85.

Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* and Brahms' *Vier ernste Gesänge* each receive its fifth recorded performance on this new Decca release.

The art of the late Heinrich Schlusnus has been much admired in some quarters, and nothing this reviewer could write would change the opinion of those admirers; yet, as one hears this recording, one wonders what it is that made so many people praise his singing? Certainly the voice was a beautiful one, but surely there is more required of a singer? (This all has a familiar ring—one has written in a similar vein before). As an example, take the third song *Leichte Segler in den Höhen* that is sung here in a jerky, bouncing manner that only makes it ridiculous. No, Herr Schlusnus is not for this listener's ears and, if comparisons are indicated, hear Alfred Poell on Westminster (TNR June '52) sing this beautiful cycle and reveal all its charm and poetry.

Quite a different affair is Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau's virile singing of the *Vier ernste Gesänge*. This performance outranks the other four by a considerable margin, the closest competition being furnished by Kathleen Ferrier on a London disc (TNR Apr. '51). Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau is a very talented young man with a flexible, colorful bass-baritone. His understanding is of a high order, and this recorded performance of these songs, the product of Brahms' sixty-third year, is a compelling one. Outstanding is the wonderful *Wenn ich mit Menschen und Engelszungen redete*. Expert accompaniments are supplied by Hertha Klust.

The recording is good, if not exceptional and better than average notes are supplied on the jacket. As is too frequently the case, however, the texts are not supplied.

W.

Schubert—arr. Berté: Das Dreimäderlhaus. (Sung in German). Soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Karl von Pauspertl. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20800) \$5.95.

Suppé: Die Schöne Galathée ("The Beautiful Galatea"). (Sung in German). Soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Hans Hagen. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-20200) \$5.95.

Messager: Véronique. (Sung in French). Soloists, Raymond St. Paul Chorus and Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jules Gressier. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-21100) \$5.95.

This month we have recordings of three light operas that have stood the test of time and are

still popular in Europe. . . . *Das Dreimäderlhaus* dates from 1916 and its first run in Berlin ran to over 500 performances. The story is based on mythical incidents in the life of Franz Schubert, and the music consists of arrangements of the melodies of that great composer. This abridged recording is quite delightful. . . . *Die Schöne Galathée* dates from 1865 and is one of Suppé's most popular operettas. It is in one act and we believe that the present recording is a complete one. The artists are well qualified for their task, and the reproduction throughout is excellent. . . . *Véronique* was first produced in Paris in 1898 and an English adaptation was quite successful in both London and the United States in the early 1900's. As it is a three-act comic opera the present recording is an abridged version. It has many gay tunes and should prove a pleasing novelty to present-day music lovers.

British Traditional Ballads in America. Shep Gindanes (vocal and guitar). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKLP-4) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *The Golden Willow Tree* (in English); *The Cruel Mother* (in English); *Lord Bateman* (in English); *Edward* (in English); *Lord Randall* (in Welsh); *Lord Thomas and Fair Elinore* (in English).

English Folk Songs. Wallace House (vocal and guitar). 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-823) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *I'm Seventeen Cum Sunday*; *On Ilkley Moore*; *The Lover's Departure*; *Poachers of Lincolnshire*; *Old Farmer Buck*; *Because I Were Shy*; *Herchard O' Taunton Dean*; *Tally Ho! My Sportsmen*; *Johnny, My Jingalo*; *The Eddystone Light*; *Turnut Hoeing*; *Jack Hall*; *AA Hope Y'll Be Kind to Me Dowter*; *Barkshire Tragedy*; *The Derby Tup*; *Jan's Courtship*.

Anglo-American Ballads. Hermes Nye (vocal and guitar). 1-10" disc (*FOLK-FP-37) \$4.45.

CONTENTS: *John Peel*; *The Mermaid*; *Earl Richard*; *Earl of Murray*; *The Red Herring*; *Greenland Fisher*; *Bailiff's Daughter*; *A North Country Maid*; *King Arthur Had Three Sons*; *Tomorrow is St. Valentine's Day*.

Lack of space permits us merely to list the above records. We have, however, indicated their contents which we hope will sufficiently identify them for collectors of folk recordings.

"Deep River." William Warfield (baritone) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-32) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *Deep River*; *Water Boy*; *Without a Song*; *Mah Lindy Lou*; *Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair*; *Dusty Road*.

There is always a demand for recordings by the great Negro baritone, William Warfield, and so we are sure that there is a waiting demand for

the present disc. This should be especially true because Mr. Warfield has chosen for this record several selections for which he is particularly famous.

A Roland Hayes Recital. Roland Hayes (tenor) accompanied by Reginald Boardman (piano). 1-12" disc (*A-440-12-3) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Have you seen but a white lile grow* (Old English); *Come again, Sweet Love doth now invite* (Dowland); *Greensleeves* (Old English); *Orfeo—Vi ricordo o bosch' ombrosi* (Monteverdi); *Tamerlano—Figlia mia, non pianger no* (Handel); *Warnung, K. 433* (Mozart); *Wonne der Wehmuth*, Op. 83, No. 1 (Beethoven); *Du bist die Ruh*, Op. 59, No. 3 (Schubert); *Wohin?*, Op. 25, No. 2 (Schubert); *Nacht und Träume*, Op. 43, No. 2 (Schubert); *Auch kleine Dinge* (Wolf); *Beau soir* (Debussy); *Micheu Banjo* (Creole Folksong—arr. Nickerson); *Poeme Persiano* (Santoliquido); *To people who have gardens* (Scottish Folksong—arr. Hopekirk); (3) *Aframerican Religious Folksongs* (arr. Hayes); (5) *Negro Worksongs* (arr. Hall).

This LP disc presents the many facets of the great art of the distinguished Negro singer, Roland Hayes. Beginning with a group of Old English Folksongs Mr. Hayes continues through Monteverdi, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Wolf, Debussy and concludes with a cycle of Negro Work-songs. With this disc we have a perfect picture of this artist. Everything he touches is marked with his fine sense of style and is presented in the best of taste. This is not a record of the singer, Roland Hayes; it is a highly diversified concert by an artist of the first rank. There is a difference.

OPERA



Russian Arias. Boris Christoff (bass) with the Philharmonia Orchestra. One side, and **Russian Songs.** Boris Christoff (bass) accompanied by Gerald Moore (piano). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WHMV-1033) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1033) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*—Prince Youri's Aria (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Khovantchina*—Dositheu's Aria (Moussorgsky); *Eugen Onegin*—Prince Gremin's Aria (Tchaikovsky); *Song of the Volga Boatman* (trad.); *The Prophet*, Op. 49, No. 2 (Rimsky-Korsakov); *Softly the Spirit Flew up to Heaven* (Moussorgsky); *Field Marshal Death* (from "Songs and Dances of Death") (Moussorgsky); *Siberian Prisoner's Song* (trad.); *The Grave* (Moussorgsky); *Song of the Flea* (Moussorgsky).

Very infrequently a young singer appears who bears the stamp of greatness, both vocally and artistically. Such an artist is the youthful Bulgarian basso, Boris Christoff. Still in his early thirties, Christoff has, from his very first recordings, exhibited

his mastery of vocal techniques and shown a dramatic flair, a knowledge of style and an ability to "act" musically. His great achievement in this direction was, of course, the wonderful recording of *Boris Godounoff*.

This present disc, a further sampling of his varied art, is an impressive one. Here unfamiliar music rubs shoulders with the very familiar (almost trite), and it is a tribute to his great interpretive ability that both kinds of music sound fresh, are of genuine interest and are, on all counts, convincing. The aria of Prince Youri from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh* is admirable music, sonorously sung. The *Khovantchina* excerpt is superb, one of those long monologues Moussorgsky delighted in and which repays so well careful and repeated hearings. Tchaikovsky's *Eugen Onegin* deserves more hearings and the aria recorded here is both an eye- and ear-opener. The songs are treated in an equally dramatic manner; and properly too, for with few exceptions they could be operatic excerpts.

Christoff's voice is a great natural deep bass that is musical and uncommonly impressive. Comparisons are frequently being drawn between this young artist and the late Feodor Chaliapin. A resemblance certainly exists; but, for this writer, Christoff has every bit as much vocal equipment as Chaliapin plus a greater sensibility and more musicianship—in short he is less of a personality and more of an artist.

The recording is good, but the notes are hardly worthy of the name.

W.

Smetana: The Bartered Bride (complete). (Sung in Czech). Milada Musilová, Jarmila Pechová (sopranos); Oldřich Kovář, Ivo Zídek (tenors); Karel Kalaš (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the Prague National Theatre conducted by Jan Vogal. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-231) \$18.50.

Proponents of opera sung in its original tongue can enjoy making a very interesting comparison with this issue of Smetana's ever green *The Bartered Bride*. Whether one prefers *Prodaná Nevěsta* or *Die Verkäufte Braut* is, of course, a matter of personal taste, aesthetics or emotion. The present writer has always felt that any opera carries a greater impact when sung in its original tongue and thus is predisposed to favor this present recording of the *Bartered Bride* over the earlier issue, also by Urania, in German.

There is little to chose from between the two sets insofar as vocalists are concerned. In the present recording, however, the cast is drawn from among native Czech singers who understand the idiom and thus are able to infuse more naturalness and vivacity into the proceedings. This is important, particularly in view of the fact that there are no outstanding voices in the cast. Milada Musilová is a sprightly Mařenka with an acceptable lyric soprano. Jeník is sung by Ivo Zídek, an average tenor who has some difficulties with his upper register. When he can

stay below an A, he does very well indeed. Kecal, the marriage broker, is portrayed by a fuzzy sort of bass named Karel Balaš, who improves as the opera proceeds. Others in the long cast are of varying degrees of excellence.

What holds this performance together and gives it conviction, however, is the spirit with which each member of the cast enters into his particular job. The result is a production that can be truthfully described as enjoyable. Naturally, much of the credit for this state of affairs is due Jan Vogal for his strong and musically direction. The chorus is excellent throughout.

Urania's recording is good, but not of the very high order of the *Méfistofele* or *Lohengrin* sets. Nonetheless, it is eminently listenable. An added feature is supplied by the erudite and readable notes on Smetana and the *Bartered Bride* by Abraham Veinus.

Vivaldi: Serenata a Tre ("La Ninfa e Il Pastore"). (Sung in Italian). Grete Rapisardi-Savio (soprano); Silvana Zanolli (mezzo-soprano); Alfredo Bianchini (tenor); Orchestra da Camera di Milano conducted by Edwin Loehr. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7990) \$5.95.

Shortly, (as history goes) after the invention of opera by the Florentine *camarata*, a group of men decided that opera would be good entertainment for the general public. To this end they opened a theatre in Venice, a city chosen because it was run by wealthy business men and a few noble families—no court nor royalty. It was not long before opera became the rage and, of course, also became stereotyped. It was necessary for composers who wanted their works performed to write in the prevailing style; but they (and the more intelligent among the audience) soon tired of the same stylized pieces, so both groups turned to a new form, the chamber opera or *serenata*. It was in this form that the experimenting was done—that a new and more advanced style was created.

Such a work is Vivaldi's *La Ninfa e Il Pastore*. The libretto is a collection of arias and recitatives that, while flowery and somewhat stilted, provides a serviceable frame upon which Vivaldi may hang some of his most graceful melodies. The singers are all excellent artists, particularly Grete Rapisardi-Savio who sings with a musical acumen that is rare in these days. Seconding her efforts is Silvana Zanolli, a thoroughly satisfying second soprano. Alfredo Bianchi is a good, if not exceptional tenor vocally. What is exceptional, however, is his good taste and musical understanding.

The work was prepared for modern presentation by Vito Frazzi, who has done a tasteful job, particularly in the orchestration. Especially felicitous is the use of horns in the aria *Alla caccia d'un cuore spietato*. Conductor Loehr and the Milan Chamber Orchestra play with finesse and spirit. The whole

recording is a worthy addition to the swelling list of Vivaldi, in particular, and to baroque music in general. First class recording, informative notes and the complete text (Italian-English) are supplied. Viva Vox!

W.

Charpentier: Médée (excerpts). Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble directed by Nadia Boulanger. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9678) \$5.85.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1634-1704) spent the first fifty years of his life in the shadow of Lully, the dominating figure of the time, and both he and his music have remained in relative obscurity ever since. This reviewer has always been fascinated by the music of obscure and forgotten composers (there are literally tons of unpublished musical manuscripts in various European libraries and museums)—what did they lack? Were they ahead of or behind their times?

Charpentier's *Médée* is a work in point. Here is an opera two hundred and sixty years old—not too great a success when first performed (even two hundred and sixty years ago they were blaming the librettist!); but contemporary criticism acclaimed the music. To modern ears the music is, of course, quite simple, melodious and singularly undramatic. For French music it has a peculiarly Italianate flavor. As a pupil of Carissimi, however, Charpentier was well grounded in the Italian style and therefore never succumbed to the influence of Lully (whom he disliked intensely). Thus, in a curious reversal of national attitudes Charpentier, the native French composer, upheld in France the Italian style against the French style of Lully, the native Italian.

The excerpts performed here by excellent soloists and a small orchestra under Nadia Boulanger are genuinely interesting. There are Handelian echos, pastoral melodies all tastefully conceived and guaranteed to entertain. The soloists include such well-known voices as those of Paul Derenne and Doda Conrad as well as some newer and equally fine singers such as Irma Kolassi (a light contralto), Nadine Sautereau and Flore Wend (two fine sopranos). The production sounds authentic although some editing has been done.

It is unfortunate that Decca did not see fit to supply any texts nor make available any information about the condensation or the very probable arrangement of the score for modern voices and instruments. The disc is well recorded and notes on the composer and the story of the opera are included. W.

Operatic Recital. Delia Rigal (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Juan E. Martini. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4060) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: *Tosca*—*Vissi d'arte*; *Gioconda*—*Suicidio!*; *Pagliacci*—*Ballatella*; *Cavalleria Rusticana*—*Voi lo sapete*; *Wally*—*Romanza di Wally*; *Traviata*—*Addio del passato*.

Delia Rigal, the young Argentinian dramatic

soprano who made her Metropolitan début some few years ago as Elisabeth in Verdi's *Don Carlo*, makes a rather unimpressive recording début here, singing six well-known operatic arias.

Miss Rigel has lots of voice, but when she pushes it, as she occasionally must, it develops a disconcerting wobble. This is particularly noticeable in the *Wally* and *Gioconda* excerpts. In addition her style, especially as concerns dramatic interpretation, is immature and consists of the gasp and gulp that formerly passed for emotion in opera. Diverse as the characters and music are, there is a singular monotony about the record: Nedda, Violetta and Santuzza all bear a startling resemblance to each other and to Miss Rigel.

For anyone who has heard this music sung by a great singer (Muzio, for example, or Milanov, to mention a contemporary) the disc will have little charm. Bargain hunters will find the price attractive but the contents are on a par with the cost. As usual, one gets what he pays for.

The recording is a bit on the shrill side and no notes of any description are furnished. W.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde (complete). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano); Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano); Ludwig Suthaus, Rudolf Schock, Edgar Evans (tenors); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Rhoderick Davies (baritones); Josef Greindl (bass); Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 6-12" discs (manual sequence only) (*V-ALP-1030/5) \$43.80.

NOTE: This set arrived from England just as we were to go to press; it will be reviewed in the September issue.

HARPSICHORD



Soler: Sonatas for Harpsichord. Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5196) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Sonatas No. 4 in D minor; No. 5 in D; No. 7 in D; No. 11 in G minor; No. 9 in D-flat; No. 12 in F-sharp; No. 3 in C minor; No. 1 in D minor; No. 2 in A minor; No. 10 in F.

Harpsichord Music of the Spanish School of Domenico Scarlatti. Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-45) \$2.95. (TNR Oct. '50).

Assumedly a pupil of D. Scarlatti and certainly his most talented disciple, Soler lacks the transcendent artistry and ingenuity that was his mentor's. We might say even that a whole LP devoted solely to Soler's Sonatas would appeal only to those eminently concerned with Spanish music of his period; for in the sublimation of folk melodies for artistic ends, much of Soler's work remains earth-bound in banality.

Valenti's playing (it goes almost without saying at this date) is expert.

The second item listed above (*AL-AL-45) was reviewed in our October 1950 issue, and is listed here primarily to bring to our readers' attention the new, low price of Allegro discs. All five of the Soler Sonatas on the Allegro recording have been repeated on Mr. Valenti's Westminster issue to an advantage, slightly musical but fundamentally reproductive, since the fidelity of the original recording is hardly a match for that of the newer one. C.

Bach: (6) English Suites. Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-305) \$18.50.

This is a companion set to Valenti's recording of Bach's (6) French Suites (*WEST-WAL-310) which was reviewed in our April 1953 issue. It is, of course, a connoisseur's item—those who were interested in the previous release will surely find the present set worthy of their attention. Valenti is unquestionably in the front rank of present-day harpsichordists, and Westminster has supplied superb reproduction.

We might mention that, as with the previous set, there is included with the present recording a very nicely printed booklet containing the miniature scores of the six English Suites.

PIANO



Piano Music of Debussy. Menahem Pressler (piano). 1-10" disc (*MGM-E-178) \$3.

CONTENTS: *Estdampes*; *Rêverie*; *Arabesque No. 1*; *Arabesque No. 2*; *La Plus que Lente* (Valse).

Piano Music of Debussy. George Copeland (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3024) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Clair de Lune*; *Minstrels*; *Afternoon of a Faun*; *Sunken Cathedral*; *Danse Sacrée*; *Pour le Piano*—Prelude; *Feuilles Mortes*; *Hommage à Rameau*; *La Boîte à joujoux*—Ronde (Debussy). *Les Grands Seigneurs* (Rameau). *Gymnopedie No. 3* (Satie).

Debussy: (6) Epigraphes Antiques. One side, and **Ravel: Ma Mère l'Oye.** Gino Gorini and Sergio Lorenzi (duo-pianists). 1-12" disc (*CSM-CLPS-1026) \$5.95.

On these three recent LP discs we have a wealth of Debussy keyboard music played by artists of the first rank. The first disc presents the young German pianist, Menahem Pressler, who, upon his first visit to the United States, won the \$1,000 Debussy prize at the San Francisco International Music Contest in 1946. Pressler was then eighteen years of age. Since that time he has appeared with a number of the most important symphony orchestras in this country—during the 1947-48 season he appeared five times with the Philadelphia Orchestra. . . .

The next disc on the list contains superb renditions by George Copeland, who is justly celebrated for his interpretations of Debussy. . . . The last disc will introduce to American music lovers the very distinguished young Italian duo of Gino Gorini and Sergio Lorenzi. We were very much impressed with their playing and urge American music lovers to lend an ear to this their first record to be made available in this country.

DICTION



"Conquest by Love." The Voice and Teaching of Mahatma Gandhi, with Albert Einstein and Jawaharlal Nehru. Narration by Krishna Menon. 1-10" disc (*HERITAGE HG-0050) \$4.85.

Gandhi's friend and follower, Krishna Menon, has pieced together various recordings of the great Indian leader and has inserted recordings of remarks by Nehru and Einstein to make this very unusual and inspiring recording. From the notes that accompany this LP disc we quote the following:

"This is a dramatic presentation of the basic thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. This is a glimpse into the realm of his belief. It is nothing more, and nothing less. For those who do not know, it will help to clarify. For those who believed and followed, it will serve as a confirmation of that belief."

All of the spoken text is in English.

Sandburg Reads Sandburg. Carl Sandburg, reading his own poetry. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7541) \$3.85.

CONTENTS: Grass; Primer Lesson; Cheap Blue; Put the City Up; Fire Logs; Southern Pacific; Prayers of Steel; Over the Bridge; Upstream; Sea Wash; Bilbea; Father and Son; Cool Tombs; Tall Grass; Wilderness For You.

The title of this recording fully describes this record. It is simply a series of readings by Carl Sandburg which he has selected from some of his various poems. We have listed the selections above; and, for those who are familiar with the well-beloved poet's voice, to listen to this disc is to have Mr. Sandburg in one's very presence.

Meditations. William Primrose (viola) and Vernon de Tar (organ). 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-33) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: Ave Maria (Schubert-Primrose); Litany for All Souls Day (Schubert-Primrose); Komm süsser Tod (Bach-de Tar); Herzlich that mich verlangen, Op. 122 (Brahms-de Tar).

These recordings, which were made in the Church of the Ascension (New York), are very likely intended for the quiet hour when one wishes to get away from the turmoil of the busy day and relax in an atmosphere of peace and repose.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haddy Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Ol'seau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address
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URANIA RECORDS, INC., has recently announced a rather unique disc which they call a "High Fidelity Demonstration Record." Unlike other "test" records which contain constant tone frequencies, thermal (white) noise, etc., this disc has real music on it—and very enjoyable music, too!

Urania has selected portions of records already issued which demonstrate the best of its recording techniques, and has placed them all on one record. The contents are: *Méfistofele*—Opening (Act I) (Boito); *Das Rheingold*—Entrance of the Gods into Valhalla (Wagner); *Die Walküre*—Ride of the Valkyries (Wagner); *Die Gotterdämmerung*—Finale (Wagner); *Three-Cornered Hat*—Opening (Falla); *Swan Lake*—Spanish & Neapolitan Dances (Act III) (Tchaikovsky); *La Gioconda*—Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli); *Symphonic Minutes*—Rondo (Dohnanyi). In addition, there are five bands containing the following constant tone frequencies: 30 cycles per second, 50 cps, 100 cps, 1000 cps, and 10,000 cps. These last, however, are very short—taking less than one-half inch for the five bands.

Many persons, anxious to demonstrate their hi-fi equipment, select bits of their favorite records to play for their friends; such things as cymbal crashes, tympani rolls, and unmuted strings afford a rather sensational show. Here Urania has done this for you; you simply place this High Fidelity Demonstration Record on your turntable and let it play all the way through.

If your local dealer cannot supply this disc, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled. Record Number *UR-URLP-7084; price, \$4.17.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for

back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning September 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Rossini: *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (highlights). Giuletta Simionato (mezzo-soprano); Luigi Infantino (tenor); Giuseppe Taddei (baritone); Antonio Cassinelli, Carlo Badioli (bassos); EIAR Chorus and Orchestra—Previtali. 1-12" disc (*CE-A50140) \$5.95. (TNR May '51).

Donizetti: *Lucia di Lammermoor* (highlights). Lina Pagliughi, Giuseppe Manacchini, Luciana Neroni, Giovanni Maliperro, Armando Giannotti, Maria Vinciguerra, with EIAR Chorus and Orchestra—Tansini. 1-12" disc (*CE-A50139) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '47).

Haydn: *Concerto in D for 'Cello and Orchestra*. Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello) with Symphony Orchestra—Sargent. One side, and Schubert: *Sonata in A minor ("Arpeggione")*. Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello) and Gerald Moore (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4677) \$5.45. (TNR July '36 and Jan. '39).

Beethoven: *Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69*. Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello) and Myra Hess (piano). One side, and Beethoven: (7) *Variations in E-flat on "Bei Mannern."* Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello) and Theo van der Pas (piano). And Reger: *Suite in G for 'Cello Solo*. Emanuel Feuermann (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4678) \$5.45. (TNR Jan. '38 and Jan. '40).

Romberg: *The Desert Song* (excerpts). Nelson Eddy with supporting cast, chorus and Orchestra—Engel. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-37) \$2.85. (TNR July '53).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Orchestral Favorites by Strauss and Offenbach. Strauss Orchestra conducted by Franz Lanner. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3032) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *Blue Danube Waltz*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, *Voices of Spring*, *Emperor Waltz*, *Die Fledermaus*—Overture (Strauss); *Orpheus in the Underworld*—Overture; *Tales of Hoffman*—Barcarolle (Offenbach).

French Orchestral Music. L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-696) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Danse Macabre*, Op. 40 (Saint-Saëns); *Le Rouet d'Omphale*, Op. 31 (Saint-Saëns); *Marche Joyeuse* (Chabrier); *Pavane pour une infante defunte* (Ravel); *España* (Chabrier).

Rimsky-Korsakov: Russian Easter Overture. And **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnole**, Op. 34. One side, and **Moussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain.** And **Borodin: In the Steppes of Central Asia.** Paris Conservatory Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7670) \$5.95.

Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2. And **Enesco Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2.** And **Dvořák: Slavonic Dance No. 1.** One side, and **Berlioz: Rakoczy March.** London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. And **Ponchielli: La Gioconda**—Dance of the Hours. Royal Opera House Orchestra conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. And **Saint-Saëns: Danse Macabre.** London Symphony Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3037) \$4.85.

ORCHESTRA



Schubert: Symphony No. 9 in C ("Great"). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-1) \$3.50.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 5 in E minor, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pfüger. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-3) \$3.50.

Borodin: Symphony No. 2 in B minor. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Gerhard Pfüger. One side, and **Borodin: Prince Igor—Polovtsian Dances.** Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Karl Rucht. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-4) \$3.50.

For peace of mind and clarity of thinking, we listened to this batch in just the reverse order in which they are listed in the heading above, so we will discuss them in that order. The Borodin disc is a fine one, at any price; and, since these three records are in *Urania's* low-priced "request" series, they must be considered a good value if they are

good performances. These German radio orchestras seem to be a competent lot. The Radio Berlin chorus and orchestra give a telling account of the *Polovtsian Dances* which *Urania* would be hard pressed to beat on their regular-priced series. Without quite the individual touches of Stokowski, this performance is as good as any we have heard on LP. The reproduction is excellent with the chorus recorded in fine proportion to the orchestra—good balance and clarity. The Borodin Second, now in its sixth LP recording, is given a lucid reading, with plenty of bite and precision. The only other recording offering competition would be Dorati and the Minneapolis (*ME-MG-50004). The excellence of the Berlin chorus will make this the preferred record of the *Polovtsian Dances*, and is in itself worth the price of the disc.

Gerhard Pfüger's reading of the "New World" Symphony can hold its own with the dozen-odd other LP's, in a performance of surprising virtues. This is no run-of-the-mill job by second-raters on a cheap LP series. It is, in fact, a beautiful effort, aided by some lovely orchestral playing and fine reproduction. There are a number of good LP's of this work, Ormandy and Kubelik having been our favorites for some time. For those who do not yet own a copy of the Dvořák Fifth, this disc is well worth consideration; it has our respect and admiration. The clarity and brilliance of reproduction, with a goodly amount of hall resonance thrown in, could easily make it the preference for many.

With the "Great C Major" of Schubert we get into deeper water, and the camps are sharply divided as to whose reading does justice to this work among the dozen LP's now available. We recently admired the Furtwängler performance (*D-DX-119) although it required three LP sides. Toscanini and von Karajan have many proponents for the excellence of their renditions. We have liked the older Bruno Walter disc, an opinion which is not too popular. Arthur Rother has no annoying mannerisms or individualities; he adheres closely to tradition and his orchestra is well routined in the requisite style. This reading may not be the most earth-shaking of them all, but it is one of solid merit and commands our respect. To have such a good reading, with modern reproduction, on a modestly priced disc is worth commendation.

Fitzner: Symphony in C-sharp minor. German Opera House Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7056) \$5.95.

This work has a curious appeal about it that we had hardly expected. It is a type of music that will be enjoyed by many lovers of symphonic music, although a fair percentage will not go for it. If you are seeking some new symphonies, not too modern, but with some originality, you will do well to try this one. The symphony originates from a string quartet, Fitzner's second (1925), which was changed

into the orchestral version in 1932. The quartet shows the strong influence of the late Beethoven quartets; it is a daring work but always rooted in the romantic. The themes of the four movements are developed from each other; the form follows tradition but is handled by Pfitzner in an original manner. The structure and development are exactly as in the original quartet. The intensity of sound is remarkable and it is interesting to note how the composer, despite his animosity toward modern music, created just that with this symphony.

Pfitzner, born in Moscow in 1869 of German parentage, made his mark in music largely as a conductor throughout Germany, and died in 1949. He did much composing, and is known for his *lieder*, choral and symphonic works, chamber music, and concertos for violin, 'cello, and piano. His *Kleine Sinfonie*, Op. 44 and *Symphony* in C, Op. 46 are already on LP, as well as several shorter works. Although his first two operas were inspired by Wagner, his famous music drama *Palestrina* showed his original style and in his oratorio *Von deutscher Seele* he returned to romantic symbolism. As an admirer of Wagner and Schumann he was against all the modern musical tendencies. It is interesting to note just how much of a modern tinge some of the present symphony does have, which may prove Pfitzner to be more of an original mind than is often thought. The performance has a fine intensity and conviction and is brilliantly recorded. S.

Delius Program. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Collins. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-758) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Brigg Fair; On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring; The Walk to the Paradise Garden; A Song of Summer.*

Walton: Orb and Sceptre (Coronation March for Full Orchestra). And **Bax: Coronation March 1953**. One side, and **Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance March in D, Op. 39, No. 1**. And **Elgar: Imperial March, Op. 32**. And **Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance March in G, Op. 39, No. 4**. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-804) \$5.95.

London has released a number of important albums in their "Special Commemorative Coronation Release;" one that will gladden the hearts of many is the *Delius Program*, for many of us have been waiting for more Delius on LP. Naturally, we have been waiting for Delius recorded by Beecham, than which there are no better Delius performances; however, we have it here by Anthony Collins. Collins is a fine conductor who has made some excellent sets for London including a much respected Sibelius *First Symphony*, and we recall some splendid CBS broadcast concerts of his a few years ago. His orchestra usually plays with a rich and meaty tone, whether soft or loud; his musicianship is good, yet imaginative. It will come as no surprise

that his Delius is not like Sir Thomas', but that is not to say it is not good. While Sir Thomas has the epitome of subtlety and nuance, Collins does not lack in atmosphere even if it is a bit less rarefied. The London Symphony under Collins delivers some luscious sounds and London has captured it with some of their finest reproduction. *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* is the only work currently on LP; *A Song of Summer* is receiving its first recording anywhere. These four numbers provide a generous and choice assortment of shorter Delius works, and we recommend this disc for those who enjoy the sensuous beauty of this man's music.

We would not want the task of composing a coronation march in the light of Elgar's fabulous efforts in this medium. To play Walton's trashy *Orb and Sceptre* after Elgar's magnificent *Pomp and Circumstance No. 1* reduces the march to a travesty; to play Elgar after Walton is to bring the march back to the regal majesty inherent in it. Walton's effort compares favorably with one of Eric Coates' gifted exercises, such as *Knightsbridge*. Bax fares better in his march; it is, in fact, a pretty good job, but Elgar runs away with the honors on this disc. Malcolm Sargent performs this music, especially the Elgar numbers, in a manner that we doubt could be duplicated—it is absolutely magnificent! London has supplied reproduction second to none. This is a thrilling disc in many respects. S.

Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor ("Tragic"). Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-736) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4 in F minor, Op. 36. RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9680) \$5.85.

Schubert composed his *Fourth Symphony* in 1816 when he was only nineteen years old. Some fifty years later Tchaikovsky completed his *Fourth Symphony* at the age of 37, about twice Schubert's age when he wrote his *Fourth*. Schubert was to write much finer symphonies, but Tchaikovsky really hit his stride with his *Fourth*. Schubert added the title "Tragic" for a later performance of the work; but the idea was not a good one. Tragedy had not made much of an impact on this lad in his teens and there is very little about the work which is tragic. Van Beinum has a heavier hand with this music than either Klemperer (*VX-PL-7860) or Freilassing (*ORFEO-10), each of whose readings we have reviewed and found to be rather vigorous. You will find this more relaxed and sweeter Schubert playing, for van Beinum is painting a picture of more sombre hues than the other conductors. The reproduction London has accorded him is also mellower than that found in either the Klemperer or Freilassing sets. All things considered, we would be inclined to take this disc by van Beinum. All LP's of this symphony occupy two sides of a 12" disc except Klemperer's;

Vox squeezed that on one side, coupling it with the Mendelssohn "Italian" Symphony, which makes that one a good second choice for the value received.

Tchaikovsky's *Fourth* is now available in several excellent versions. Until now our preference has been for the Ormandy disc, but there are several with better, more modern reproduction. The present disc by Fricsay and the RIAS Orchestra of Berlin (Radio in the American Sector, in case you are puzzled by RIAS) is indeed a good one. Fricsay has a few original ideas but in general offers a fine reading with plenty of excitement; it is well played by the orchestra. Going back over some other "Fourths" we found the Kubelik (*ME-MG-50003) worth while, on the slow side but powerful and, of course, well recorded. Kubelik is inclined to fuss with the music more; Fricsay is more straightforward. These are worth comparing, as they are the best in quality of reproduction, although quite different in performance. Other versions lack one thing or another, so we recommend Fricsay or Kubelik for this work; if you can't compare them, take Fricsay.

S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 1 in C minor. Vienna State Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5189) \$5.95.

From the very opening chord of this recording everything struck us as being wrong and annoying about it. Comparing it carefully with the Ormandy (*C-ML-4477), Toscanini (*V-LM-1702) and Kubelik (*ME-MG-50007) readings confirmed our dislike of Scherchen's treatment. Even leaving Scherchen out of it, we still do not like the sound that meets the ear. This is easily the loudest orchestral record we ever heard; there is no toning it down. The sound is so metallic and wiry that no tone controlling can sweeten it. It is very clear and well balanced, but even the clarity militates against this set, for the Vienna State Opera Orchestra is no paragon of precision. It is just a grating and annoying sound from beginning to end.

Scherchen has ideas about the Brahms *First* which are often similar to Toscanini's; but where Toscanini has the skill to fashion these ideas into a smooth and convincing performance, Scherchen is all ends and disjointed phrases. As we said in the February 1953 issue, we recommend Ormandy (*C-ML-4477) as the one most persons will enjoy. Others well worth consideration are Kubelik, Toscanini, Leinsdorf, Stokowski, Keilberth and Rodzinski—in about that order.

S.

Ravel: Bolero. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio Espagnol.** Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50020) \$5.95.

In past years Paul Paray has been reluctant to place his talents on records, contending that too much of the true orchestral impact was lost in phonograph reproduction to consider the recorded

sound an acceptable facsimile of the original. With the advent, however, of "high-fidelity," Mr. Paray has accordingly altered his stand and is now to be heard on Mercury's Olympian Series, whose remarkable fidelity could hardly better suit his purposes.

In 1951, the seventy year old conductor became head of the then long waning Detroit Orchestra, raising that group to a standard of merit on which it had not functioned for many years. Mr. Paray's associations with the Detroit Orchestra and Mercury Records are two of the happiest combinations of talents, we think, to have occurred during the short history of LP records; for as anyone can glean from hearing his current release, his almost unique mastery of orchestral masses, his capability to discipline the forces of a large orchestra into a tightly formalized and sensibly pleasing pattern place him immediately beside such classical conductors as Toscanini. The French master's reading of *Bolero*, a work which probably has more aesthetic merit than most musicologists admit, is compelling in its perfection. His execution of the *Capriccio Espagnol* radiates with Rimsky's vivid colorations through exacting conductorial demands; so that this first of Paray's projected releases creates as much an anticipation to enjoy those to follow as it does satisfaction with itself.

C.

Glazounov: Symphony No. 7 in F, Op. 77. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Felix Lederer. One and one-half sides, and **Miaskovsky: Lyric Concertino in F, Op. 77.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Adolf Fritz Guhl. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7088) \$5.95.

These works appear for the first time in the LP lists. Glazounov's *Seventh Symphony* is a facile work which makes no demands on the listener. It sounds, in a general way, like dozens of other works without being directly reminiscent of anything in particular. It is a nice pleasant symphony which anyone can enjoy on first hearing. Lederer and the Radio Berlin Orchestra play the music with a proper feeling and give it a good profile. It is so clearly Russian—of the Glazounov period—that one could hardly miss. The four movements are conventional, with a lovely third movement Scherzo, deftly orchestrated and reflecting Rimsky-Korsakov's influence. The finale re-assembles most of the music from the preceding movements within the framework of a vigorous and nationalistic approach. It must be enjoyable, for it seems to move along quickly, always a good sign; however, it lacks, to us, any distinguishing features, except that it is not irritating.

Miaskovsky is one of the most prolific of living composers. He is in an enviable position among Soviet composers, having followed the line of least resistance by providing the government with patriotic-sounding titles to many of his works. The Symphony No. 12 is subtitled "Collective Farm." Some of his

choral pieces are entitled: "Kirov Is With Us," "Song of the Border Guards," "Glory to Our Soviet Pilots," and "Lenin." He has also written a "Stalingrad Symphony." He holds several official positions in music in Russia. For the most part, Miaskovsky is a composer of absolute music, and we hope that the phony titles mentioned above have completely fooled the powers over there.

The present work is an innocuous invention which was conceived in 1926-7, while the composer was busy at work on his *Tenth Symphony*. It is lighter in texture and substance than most of his music and is said to reflect a Gallic approach to chamber orchestra writing, being scored for five instruments and strings. It is well played and recorded here and provides a good fillip for the remainder of side two of this disc. S.

Albéniz—arr. Arbós: *Iberia*. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7085) \$5.95.

Iberia, consisting of twelve pieces for piano which Albéniz wrote towards the end of his life, is generally considered his masterpiece and the summation of his art. Unlike many transcriptions, Arbós' orchestration of the work is a highly successful one. Much, of course, of the original rhythmic and harmonic intensity is lost; but in its place is obtained the orchestral variety which, of necessity, the original lacked, and which, judging from the success of the orchestral version, it partially demanded. The more incisive and dramatic mood of the piano reading gives way, in this recording, to a diffuse, somewhat impressionistic sound that in its own way is as significant musically as the former.

George Sebastian's conducting presents nothing for negative criticism. Reproduction, as is the case with all current *Urania* LP's, is extremely realistic. C.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 in G.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5113) \$5.95.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 in G. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 6 in B.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5172) \$5.95.

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D. One side, and **Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 in G.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5174) \$5.95.

For as pure an example of the sound of a baroque ensemble to be had on records, these versions of the *Brandenburg Concerti* must be recognized as being nonpareil. The use of recorders instead of flutes in the second and fourth concerti (as per the original edition) adds exquisitely to the already warm and animate sound of the London Baroque Ensemble, which partakes of neither the characteristics of a

modern small orchestra nor a modern large chamber group; but rather, as was Bach's intention, it consists of a heterogeneous variety of sounds, ever fresh in stimulating combinations, now in solo, now in unison.

Beyond, however, the unique sounds of these records, there are minor defects. The tempi are generally too slow, the playing somewhat inaccurate and spiritless. These blemishes are never grossly existent nor unduly detractive; so that Karl Haas' versions of the works, we should say, surpass all other versions excepting Karl Münchinger's (*L-LL-222, *L-LS-226, *L-LL-144), which we consider to be easily the best. C.

Coates: The Three Elizabeths Suite. One side, and

Coates: Four Centuries Suite. New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Coates. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-753) \$5.95.

Walton: Façade (Suites I and II). One side, and

Lambert: Horoscope (Ballet Suite). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Irving. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-771) \$5.95.

This pair of discs contains music by three of Britain's most prominent present-day composers: Eric Coates, William Walton and Constant Lambert. The first disc contains the now quite well-known *The Three Elizabeths Suite*, written to honor Elizabeth Tudor, The Queen Mother, and the present Queen Elizabeth. This work is in Coates' usual pleasing vein—not too profound. The *Four Centuries Suite* is in four movements and is based on dance music of the 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. It starts out with a 17th century hornpipe and ends with a modern dance tune full of rhythms of the present day. It's quite a piece! The second disc contains two ballet suites, both of which ballets have been performed at the Sadler's Wells Theatre.

If you would like to listen to some popular music of the better class that appeals to our English cousins, here is your opportunity. All of it has been recorded by fine orchestras and has been most faithfully reproduced on these LP discs.

Respighi: Gli Uccelli. One side, and **Respighi: Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto—Suite No. 2.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-433) \$5.95.

Litschauer's recording of Respighi's *Gli Uccelli* (The Birds) is far superior to the earlier recording of this work on LP by the EIAR Symphony. In fact we feel that it is a top-notch performance, and we are very sure that those interested in this popular Respighi opus will be highly pleased with it. The same composer's second suite of *Ancient Airs and Dances for the Lute* is an appropriate coupling. Litschauer also presents this work in an attractive and highly artistic manner. The reproduction throughout is excellent.

Glazounov: Raymonda, Op. 57—Ballet Suite. Paris Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Manuel Rosenthal. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8184) \$5.70.

Scarлатi—arr. Tommasini: **The Good Humoured Ladies**—Ballet Suite. One side, and **Mozart: Les Petits Riens**—Ballet-Pantomime. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3034) \$4.85.

Rossini: Guglielmo Tell—Overture and Ballet Music. One side, and **Rossini: Matinées Musicales**. And **Rossini**—arr. Britten: **Soirées Musicales**. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3028) \$4.85.

Tchaikovsky: The Slippers—Suite. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 4 in G, Op. 61** ("Mozartiana"). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3026) \$4.85.

Schubert—arr. Fekete: **Snow White Ballet Suite**. Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. One side, and **Fekete: Caucasian Ballet Suite**. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Zoltan Fekete. 1-12" disc (*CSM-CLPS-1011) \$5.95.

Ravel: Daphnis et Chloé Ballet (complete). Motet Choir of Geneva directed by Jacques Horneffer and l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-693) \$5.95.

Lalo: Namouna Ballet—Suite No. 1. One side, and **Lalo: Namouna Ballet**—Suite No. 2. And **Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suite No. 2**—Intermezzo. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7068) \$5.95.

Nights at the Ballet. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3006) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Coppélia—Swanhilda's Waltz and Czardas (Delibes); **Les Sylphides**—Prelude and Grande valse brillante (Chopin); **Swan Lake**—(2) Scenes and Dance of the Little Swans (Tchaikovsky); **Carnaval**—Preamble, Reconnaissance, Pantalon and Columbine (Schumann); **Sylvia**—Les Chasseres and Pizzicati (Delibes); **Nutcracker**—Waltz of the Flowers (Tchaikovsky); **Boutique Fantasque**—Tarantella, Scene, Can Can (Rossini); **Vespri Siciliana**—L'Autunno (Verdi).

Popular Ballet Music from Great Operas. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3003) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Faust—Ballet Music (complete) (Gounod); **La Gioconda**—Dance of the Hours (Ponchielli); **Aïda**—Ballet (Act II) (Verdi); **Lakmé**

—Airs de danse (Act II) (Delibes); **Carmen**—Gypsy Dance and Farandole (Bizet); **Guiglielmo Tell**—Dances (Acts II and IV) (Rossini).

We regret that we only have space to simply list these records of ballet music that have arrived at the studio during the last couple of months. We have, however, carefully listened to each of them and we can report that both the performance and the reproduction of each are well up to par.

Massenet: Le Cid—Ballet Music (Act II). And **Massenet: Le Cid**—Moorish Rhapsody (Act III). One side, and **Massenet: Scènes Alsaciennes** (Orchestral Suite No. 7). Royal Opera House Orchestra (Covent Garden) conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3016) \$4.85.

Massenet: Le Cid—Ballet Music (Act II). One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: The Tale of the Czar Saltan Suite, Op. 57**. Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Henk Spruit. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1155) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: The Tale of the Czar Saltan Suite, Op. 57. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Otto Dobrindt. One side, and **Glière: The Red Poppy** (Ballet Suite). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Hans Gahlenbeck. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7078) \$5.95.

The three LP discs listed above contain much brilliant and gay music played with fine spirit by three foreign orchestras of note. We were particularly impressed with Concert Hall's recording of the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Henk Spruit.

Music of Cole Porter. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4682) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Begin the Beguine; All through the Night; I Concentrate on You; I Love You; Night and Day; In the Still of the Night; I've Got You Under My Skin; Blow, Gabriel, Blow.

The general musical public never seems to get enough of Kostelanetz recordings. Nearly every record that this unique musician has made has been a good seller and continues to sell for years after its issue. There is a reason for this. Kostelanetz selects popular tunes that have that something about them that makes them live on and on, and he presents them in fascinating arrangements that catch and hold the popular fancy. Add to this the fact that Kostelanetz selects the best of players for his orchestra and diligently rehearses them until he secures the results that he requires, and you have the secret as to why his recordings enjoy such tremendous sales.

Bloch: Concerto Grosso for String Orchestra and Piano. One side, and **Schuman: Symphony for Strings**. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-S-8212) \$5.95.

A product of the first Pittsburgh International

Contemporary Music Festival, November 1952, these performances sound very much like the community project they apparently were, more the product of civic pride than artistic merit. One must even question the internationality of Schuman's Symphony which sounds substantially more morbidly romantic here than in the superior Schenkman reading (*CH-CHS-1078). The Bloch Concerto gets rougher, less satisfactory treatment in the hands of Steinberg than in those of Kubelik (*ME-MG-50001). And if anyone is searching for important 20th Century music to record, he might turn to Bartók's *Cantata Profana* or Stravinsky's *Les Noces* before pointlessly duplicating minor works.

Music by Raff and Mendelssohn. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4005) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: Scherzino, Cavatina, The Mill, Aria, Scherzo (Raff); On Wings of Song, Octet—Scherzo, Little Suite (from the "Songs without Words") (Mendelssohn).

Music by Schubert. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4006) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: Valse Caprice, Rosamunde—Entr'acte and Ballet Music, (2) Galops, Marche Militaire, Rondo (from "Sonata No. 11 in D, Op. 53"), Ave Maria, Marche Caracteristique.

Leslie Bridgewater has taken some of the better known music of Raff, Mendelssohn and Schubert and with the best of taste presents it in a quiet and highly pleasing manner. It makes excellent background music especially suitable for the dinner hour. These recordings, which were made in the famous Konzerthaus, Vienna, are examples of the best of modern reproduction.

Strauss: Wiener Blut, Op. 354 ("Vienna Blood"). And **Strauss: Wein, Weib und Gesang, Op. 333** ("Wine, Women and Song"). One side, and **Strauss: G'schichten aus dem Wiener Wald, Op. 325** ("Tales from the Vienna Woods"). And **Strauss: Kaiser, Op. 437** ("Emperor Waltz"). Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50019) \$5.95.

Strauss Overtures, Polkas and Marches. Philadelphia Orchestra "Pops" conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4686) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Tritsch-Tratsch Polka, Explosions Polka, Egyptian March, Die Fledermaus—Overture, Thunder and Lightning Polka, Die Fledermaus—Polka, Queen's Lace Handkerchief—Overture (J. Strauss, Jr.); Radetzky March (J. Strauss, Sr.); Pizzicato Polka (J. Strauss, Jr. and Josef Strauss).

Lovers of Strauss melodies will surely welcome these excellent recordings by two fine orchestras led

by men who, among their many other accomplishments, are in the groove with such lively and melodious music. The best of reproduction prevails on both records.

Semprini: Mediterranean Concerto. One side, and **Docker: Legend. And King: Theme from "Runnymede Rhapsody."** Rochester "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Morton Gould (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-36) \$2.85.

Morton Gould directs the Rochester "Pops" from his seat at the piano in three selections that should prove popular with audiences at summer "pops" concerts. Semprini's *Mediterranean Concerto* has been quite the rage in England for some time but hasn't caught on over here to any extent.

Bizet: L'Arlesienne Suites Nos. 1 and 2. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7538) \$3.85.

We see no particular need for additional recordings of these Bizet selections; there are several excellent versions already available. However, Decca has recently released the present LP disc and we feel that our readers should know of it.

Haydn: Symphony No. 44 in E minor ("Trauersymphonie"). One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 49 in F minor** ("La Passione"). Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5206) \$5.95.

If you are interested in these Haydn symphonies, we can assure you that the present versions by Scherchen and the Vienna State Opera are the best available. Most faithful reproduction is an added feature.

Kabalevsky: The Comedians, Op. 26. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One-half side, and **Prokofiev: A Summer Day—Suite.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Adolf Fritz Guhl. One side, and **Dvořák: The Watersprite, Op. 107.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Gerhard Wiesenbütter. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7082) \$5.95.

A new recording of *The Comedians* and first recordings on LP of *The Watersprite* and *A Summer Day* have been coupled by the redoubtable gentleman who decides what disassociated works may share the same record and whose frequently strange and disconcerting decisions are, no doubt, the product of a finer intellect than is had by us who only listen to the records. He has not, however, we should say, in this instance done too poor a job.

The performance of *The Comedians* to be had here is a well-mannered one without quite the raucous intentions of some of its fellows. The *Summer Day Suite*, containing seven orchestrated sections from the original twelve-section piano work *Musique d'enfants*, has much of the delightfulness but not

quite so much of the melodic quality of *Peter and the Wolf*. And the *Watersprite*, one of three symphonic poems which Dvořák wrote on returning from the United States and which is a musical account of some of the actions of a "sprite" or evil spirit, contains, from a technical standpoint, an extremely fine example of his craft.

All three compositions are well played and share the advantage of fine reproduction, even as they share the same disc.

C.



CONCERTO

Beethoven: Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 73 ("Emperor"). Elly Ney (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-10) \$3.50.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op. 23. Alex de Vries (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-2) \$3.50.

The Schwann catalog now lists over a dozen LP's of each of these two popular concertos. Neither of these recordings would cause us to change any preferences we have stated in recent months in these columns concerning a choice among the existing versions. That is not to say that these two are not quite good. Considering the price asked for them, they are a good value, featuring modern recording and good orchestral support. The "Emperor" has not the sinewy strength and, in spots, the digital dexterity that can be found in numerous other disc versions. The finale, in particular, is somewhat insecure in places, and even Karl Böhm and the well-disciplined Vienna Philharmonic cannot get in a solid groove with the soloist occasionally. Disregarding price, Horowitz, Serkin, and Curzon have recordings of greater merit. Considering price, some may prefer Denis Matthews (*C-RL-3037).

While Elly Ney is a familiar name on records, Alex de Vries is a name we cannot recall at the moment. This pianist has a serious approach to the well-worn Tchaikovsky concerto which results in a reading of large proportions, although an ability to sustain this large conception that barely, at times, meets the requirements. It takes Horowitz-type fingers of steel to put this type of performance over; if you are not too aware of minute technical matters, you will find de Vries not only adequate, but thrilling. Arthur Rother and the Radio Berlin Orchestra provide a magnificent accompaniment in close rapport with the soloist. The ending they put on the first movement is a mighty effort which comes off beautifully. De Vries does not, fortunately become too slow and slushy in the middle movement, offering a clear, but poetic reading. The last movement is spread out, contains climax upon climax, with tempo changes and many points of expansion and ritard. It comes off surprisingly well. The second and third

movements fare better than the first. Those who want a straighter and brisker performance will find others in the LP lists; this one will appeal to many fanciers of the work.

S.

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Gyorgy Sandor (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4651) \$5.45.

Chopin: Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op. 11. Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano) with the Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Hans Swarowsky. One and one-half sides, and **Chopin: (4) Impromptus.** Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7870) \$5.95.

In the Sandor-Ormandy recording of the Chopin *First Concerto*, there is an enormous cut in the orchestral introduction. Not having a score at hand, we cannot say how many measures, but we would guess at least seventy-five. This is doubly curious, since the notes on the jacket state: "The first movement begins with an orchestral introduction of one hundred-odd measures in which all the principal themes of the movement appear . . ." Whoever wrote the notes had not heard the recording or he would not have reminded the listener of this fact. Swarowsky offers the score as written, and with less of an annoyed approach which sticks out of the Ormandy reading. Horszowski is a more able pianist in matters of projecting the Chopin idiom than Sandor. While the Columbia reproduction is brighter and more forward, the Vox recording is good, and considering the performance, the more desirable of the two. Other disc versions are no better.

Vox has been quite a champion of the four *Impromptus*. Guiomar Noväes and Gaby Casadesus have recorded them for Vox; however the numbers seem to have been withdrawn at this time. Now we have Horszowski's versions, and they have only one competitor, Erno Balogh. The four *Impromptus* included on the same disc as the concerto make this an attractive value. Horszowski, a much admired pianist by musicians, plays these works with strength and a rather lofty style that eschews any romantic dalliance. He carries it rather far in the case of the overplayed *Fantasy-Impromptu*, but he is probably correct—our tastes prefer a freer reading, right or wrong. In all, this is a good Chopin disc, which can stand up well with competition.

S.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19. One side, and **Beethoven: Concerto in E-flat (1784).** Paul Jacobs (piano) with l'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-35) \$5.95.

The interest in this disc lies in the recording of the *Concerto in E-flat*. Written in 1784 when Beethoven was a lad of fourteen, the published score consisted merely of the piano part with orchestral introductions, interludes, and codas reduced to

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
† indicates 45 rpm.

two staves and which did not include any orchestral accompaniment. The actual orchestration customarily performed today was carried out, in the early thirties, by the Swiss musician Willy Hess. René Leibowitz has made some changes in this orchestration, which he explains in the cover notes (he wrote the notes, and they are excellent). Leibowitz also wrote a cadenza for the first movement and completed the second movement cadenza. The work which Leibowitz has done not only improves the music, but also adds to his knowledge and authority in conducting the music. There are two other LP's of this work, but we think the present set is the best; the loving care in preparation is evident and the finish which soloist and conductor bring to their performance is admirable.

The Concerto No. 2 is played with fine regard for the fact that Beethoven was using Mozart for a model in this, his first concerto of the famous five (it was composed before the C major, Op. 15, when the composer was 25 years old). While it shows a depth and mastery, it was clearly patterned after Mozart's later piano concertos. Other recordings of the Second by Backhaus and by Kapell are on 10" LP discs, which are a disadvantage, particularly since the present disc has such an interesting coupling. We would recommend this one as a good buy; it is good mechanically and artistically. S.

Gershwin: Concerto in F. Leonard Pennario (piano) with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8219) \$5.70.

Whether we have not heard the work for a while, whether we appreciate it more, or whether this is an exceptional performance of the work, we do not know; but this recording proved to be most enjoyable and commanded a new respect for the music. Written a quarter of a century ago, in the jazz idiom at the invitation of Dr. Walter Damrosch, this work is holding up well today as an acceptable concerto in the standard repertoire. It has a remarkable fusion of standard symphonic styles with genuine popular jazz styles of its day, and it is as American, even now, as a hot dog and coke.

Steinberg's performance appears to be based on the letter of the score, with less gilding of the lily than Kostelanetz can resist in the only other LP recording (*C-ML-4025). Leonard Pennario, who has contributed a lot of fine piano playing to Capitol's library, is a far less celebrated Gershwin interpreter than Oscar Levant, pianist on the Columbia disc; however, Pennario plays this work with unfailing enthusiasm and fine technical resource. His playing in the fast and tricky third movement is splendid. Capitol has captured this performance with fine fidelity and good balance. The Pittsburgh Orchestra plays with a skill that places it high in the roster of our best orchestras. We can recommend this disc without reservation. One thing always

amuses us about this work—typically American as it is, the tempo indications of each movement are in Italian, a matter which, fortunately, cannot be heard. S.

Handel: (3) Concerti for Viola and Orchestra. Emanuel Vardi (viola) with the Stradivari Chamber Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*STR-617) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Concertos in B minor, G minor, and B-flat.

Unfortunately William Primrose has not seen fit to re-record the Handel B-flat Viola Concerto which he so expertly executed on 78 rpm; but also unfortunate is the fact that Emanuel Vardi's reading of the work does not match that of Primrose. Vardi's performance is nervously angular and overly fast. It does not have the freer tensions which performances of baroque music ought to have. Nor are his readings of the G minor and B-flat Concerti permitted a more relaxed pace. Playing, however, both by soloist and orchestra is notably accurate and consistent and should, for this reason, be appealing to those who prefer the demonically angular conceptions of, for example, Casals or Toscanini. C.

Mozart: Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 25 in C, K. 503.**

Marguerite Roesgen-Champion (piano) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-571) \$5.95.

Mozart: Concerto in G, K. 313. Fernand Marseau (flute) with the Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. One side, and **Mozart:**

Concerto in D, K. 314. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) with the Leamoureux Orchestra conducted by Arthur Goldschmidt. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-564) \$5.95.

As there are adequate recordings of all of this Mozart music already available, we can see no particular reason for the release of the present versions. However, as Mme. Roesgen-Champion has quite a following among record collectors in this country, it is possible that her recordings of these two popular Mozart concertos may enjoy a reasonable sale.

Mozart: Concerto No. 21 in C, K. 467. One side,

and **Mozart: Concerto No. 26 in D, K. 537** ("Coronation"). Joerg Demus (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Milan Horvath. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5183) \$5.95.

The main interest in this disc is the coupling, for it pairs two works which have much in common, and which have similar appeal. Two other LP's of the No. 21 exist, and at least one of them, Jensen and Woldike (*HS-HSLP-1054) is a better job than this one by Demus. Four other LP's of the No. 26 are in the catalogs, and at least one of them is better than Demus', that being Kraus and Moralt (*VX-PL-7300)—there is also the well-known No. 26 by Landowska (*V-LCT-1029). Most persons

will find the present disc by Demus satisfactory, for the points of superiority in the other versions are fine points, to be sure. Demus is a young artist who has not quite the control of these other pianists, but his style is good, as is also the style of the accompaniments he receives. In the No. 21 he plays a cadenza by Busoni, which may not be the last word in your opinion, and he also adds a few Viennese touches here and there in some piano entrances.

The general competence and the attractiveness of the coupling of these two works should give this disc a fair competitive chance. The reproduction is good, with good piano tone and fine balance. S.

CHAMBER MUSIC

Bartók: Portrait, Op. 5, No. 1. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. And **Bartók: Rhapsody No. 1.** Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Béla Bartók (piano) (TNR Feb. '41). One side, and **Bartók: Contrasts for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.** Joseph Szigeti (violin), Béla Bartók (piano) and Benny Goodman (clarinet) (TNR Dec. '40). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2213) \$4.

In our July 1953 issue we reviewed two recordings of Bartók's *Sonata for Unaccompanied Violin*, one of which was coupled with the same composer's *Three Contrasts for Violin, Piano, and Clarinet*; and in that review we spoke, briefly, of the techniques of playing Bartók's music. Here, in a re-release featuring Joseph Szigeti, one of the few truly competent exponents of the work of the late Hungarian composer, occurs, we think, precisely the ideally correct kind of performance of which we spoke.

The *Three Contrasts* was commissioned by the Messrs. Goodman and Szigeti, and with Bartók himself here executing the piano part, the three of them have little trouble outclassing the aggressive and immature noises that one finds on the Bartók recording (*BARTOK-BRS-916). The *Rhapsody No. 1* was dedicated to Joseph Szigeti and it, like the *Portraits for Orchestra*, is a product of Bartók's early style, though certainly is not, because of that, to be thought of as inferior.

Although all three works on this disc were recorded many years ago, only the *Rhapsody* and the *Contrasts* have previously been issued (and reviewed in TNR as indicated in the heading above); for some reason, the *Portrait, Op. 5, No. 1* was never issued, and so we owe a debt of thanks to Columbia for having preserved the master and making it available to us at long last.

Mr. Szigeti, as he performs in all three of these works, displays his musical services to the late composer in the most splendid manner, providing here, as he does, one of the most significant and representative discs of Bartók's work. C.

Villa-Lobos: Nonetto (for Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Saxophone, Bassoon, Harp, Celesta, Battery and Mixed Chorus). One side, and **Villa-Lobos: Quatuor** (for Flute, Harp, Celesta, Alto Saxophone and Women's Voices). Roger Wagner Chorale and the Concert Arts Players conducted by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8191) \$5.70.

Considerable attention is being directed these days to the extraordinarily vigorous and exciting works of Brazil's Heitor Villa-Lobos. There are approximately sixteen records listed in the Schwann catalog and the present disc is a worthwhile addition to the growing total.

Villa-Lobos delights in odd combinations of instruments (one of the *Bachianas Brasilieras* is scored for soprano, seven 'cello and one double bass) and these two chamber works show this characteristic at its peak. The *Nonetto* is a sort of musical tour of Brazil (it is sub-titled *Impressão Rápida de todo o Brasil*) and includes a wild celebration, snatches of song, a glimpse of street life and so on. It is not easy music, either for performer or listener, but the sheer vigor of the score, almost overwhelming at first, is one of its chief merits—such vitality impresses even if the idiom is exotic. The *Quatuor* is a quieter piece, more lyrical, more formal. In fact, it is divided into three movements, an *allegro con moto*, *andantino* and a final *allegro deciso*. It is described as "pastoral" in nature on the jacket notes but there are countrysides and countrysides.

The use of voices in both works is confined to vocalising; there are no words. The effect is striking and, somehow, essentially proper. This reviewer's quarrel with both works is the inclusion of the saxophone. This instrument with its characteristic "mooing" quality has always been annoying and, coupled with its association with dance bands, has always been a *bête noir*. This may be pure snobbery, but it is none the less real.

Despite the presence of the saxophone, however, the pieces are invigorating spiritually and rewarding musically. Roger Wagner directs with verve and enthusiasm in which he is seconded by his instrumentalists and chorus. Good recording is an added feature. Well worth investigating. W.

Handel: (6) Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord, Op. 1. Alfred Campoli (violin) and George Malcolm (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-652) \$5.95.

Handel: (4) Sonatas for Recorder and Continuo, Op. 1. Alfred Mann (recorder), Helmut Reimann (violincello) and Helma Elsner (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7910) \$5.95.

Of the fifteen Sonatas which comprise Handel's Opus No. 1, six are for violin, four are for recorder, three are for transverse flute and two are for oboe—all of course, having a thorough bass. Those for violin and for recorder are presented here in two

of the finest recordings of Handelian chamber music now available. Alfred Campoli captures perfectly the baroque rhythms of these Sonatas, warm but unsentimental in the slow movements and brilliantly vivacious in the fast ones. His accompanist, George Malcolm, fully shares his competent spirit as both are clearly projected in London's typically excellent fidelity.

Alfred Mann has not only presented one of the most splendid discs of Handel's works, but one of the finest discs in the entire repertoire of pre-classical music and, to our hearing, the best example of the unfortunately near defunct art of recorder playing. He avoids all spurious effects, exhibiting an understanding and devotion to the Sonatas (instead of to his audience, or, as with the romantics, to himself) that is refreshingly rare in its integrity. His accompanists, Helmut Reimann and Helma Elsner, like George Malcolm, are comparably excellent and they, like Campoli and Malcolm, are realistically presented on Vox's new "Ultra High Fidelity" records. C,

Schubert: Quartet No. 1 in B-flat. And **Schubert: Quartet No. 2 in C.** One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 3 in B-flat.** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5204) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 4 in C. One side, and **Schubert: Quartet No. 5 in B-flat.** And **Schubert: Quartet No. 12 in C minor ("Quartetsatz").** Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5210) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 13 in A minor, Op. 29. Vegh String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-587) \$5.95.

Schubert: Quartet No. 12 in C minor ("Quartetsatz"). One side, and **Wolf: Italienische Serenade in G.** Koeckert Quartet. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4044) \$2.50.

Schubert: Nocturne in E-flat, Op. 148. One side, and **Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 60.** Mannes-Gimpel-Silva Trio: Leopold Mannes (piano), Bronislav Gimpel (violin) and Luigi Silva (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9604) \$5.85.

Another batch of recordings of Schubert chamber music recently arrived at the studio. Of prime importance are the splendid recordings of five of the early string quartets (Nos. 1 to 5 incl.) by the excellent Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet. All of these interesting works were composed before the young Schubert was seventeen years of age.

Villa-Lobos: Trio for Violin, Viola and Violoncello (1945). Alexander Schneider (violin), Milton Katims (viola) and Frank Miller (violoncello). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2214) \$4.

This Trio of Villa-Lobos is not a work that one can grasp at the first one or two hearings. It is in the modern idiom and depends for its attraction

upon its rhythmic excitement rather than its melodies which will sound strange to ears not accustomed to music of this character. The recording artists, who are members of The New York Quartet, give a cleanly cut and spirited performance which would seem to us to present the music in its most attractive form.

Dvořák: Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96 ("American"). One side, and **Smetana: Quartet No. 1 in E minor ("Aus meinen Leben").** Koeckert Quartet: Rudolf Koeckert and Willi Buchner (violins), Oskar Reidl (viola) and Josef Merz (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9637) \$5.85.

Dvořák: Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96 ("American"). One side, and **Smetana: Quartet No. 1 in E minor ("Aus meinen Leben").** Curtis String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5199) \$5.95.

Dvořák: Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96 ("American"). One side, and **Smetana: Quartet No. 1 in E minor ("Aus meinen Leben").** Stradivari Records String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*STRAD-STR-613) \$5.95.

Dvořák: Quartet No. 6 in F, Op. 96 ("American"). Hungarian Quartet: Zoltan Szekely and Alexandre Moskovsky (violins), Laurent Halleux (viola) and Vilmos Palotai (violoncello). One side, and **Dvořák: Suite in D, Op. 39 ("Czech").** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Henry Swoboda. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1157) \$5.95.

The reviewer's life is indeed not a happy one when four more recordings of Dvořák's "American" Quartet and three of Smetana's "Aus meinen Leben" Quartet arrive within a month or two. As for the "American" Quartet, we have a highly satisfactory version in our private library by the Griller String Quartet (*L-LL-4) and we see no reason to make a change. As for the "Aus meinen Leben" Quartet, we would choose the Curtis String Quartet recording listed above. We would then have two recordings of the Dvořák "American" but then there is nothing we can do about that.

Beethoven: Trio in G, Op. 9, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio in D, Op. 9, No. 2.** Jean Pouget (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and Anthony Pini (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5198) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio No. 5 in D, Op. 70, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio No. 6 in E-flat, Op. 70, No. 2.** Santoliquido Trio: Ornella Puliti Santoliquido (piano), Arrigo Pelliccia (violin) and Massimo Anfiteatroff (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9691) \$5.85.

As there are other LP recordings of these Beethoven chamber works, we can see no particular reason for these additional versions. However, they are of excellent quality. In fact we were very much impressed with the Westminster recordings of Opus 9, Nos. 1 and 2.

Debussy: (3) Sonatas. Jean Fournier (violin), Ginette Doyen (piano), Antonio Janigro (violoncello), Camille Manausek (flute), Erich Weiss (viola) and Hans Jellinek (harp). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5207) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Sonata No. 1 in D minor for Violoncello and Piano; Trio Sonata No. 2 for Flute, Viola and Harp; Sonata No. 3 in G minor for Violin and Piano.

Quite frequently the couplings that occur on a single LP record reflect little thought on the part of the recording company; in fact, occasionally they even exhibit a strange sense of musical values of the type which is responsible for combining such disparate composers as Bach and Bruch, Mozart and Bartók, and Satie and Schönberg. Westminster has, apparently, more than any other company, shown competence in avoiding these follies and an unique talent for setting forth such satisfactory combinations as the four overtures to Beethoven's *Fidelio* and the two Liszt Piano Concerti on single records. They now offer, as an additional example of their taste, three of Debussy's most prominent chamber works on one of the most attractive and representative LP's of the French impressionistic period. The performances are completely satisfactory and in extensive sympathy with the music, aided, in their effect, as is so frequently the case with Westminster records, by a kind of recorded sound that, we should say, is just about ideal for conveying chamber music.

C.

CHORAL



Haydn: Die Jahreszeiten ("The Seasons"). (Sung in German). Elfride Trötschel (soprano); Walter Ludwig (tenor); Josef Greindl (bass); RIAS Chamber Choir; Choir of St. Hedwig's Cathedral and RIAS Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 3-12" discs in album (*D-DX-123) \$17.55.

This is the third appearance of Haydn's *The Seasons* on LP discs. The first by Cetra is an abridged version and early recording. The other complete recording is by the Haydn Society and, while an estimable job, it is overshadowed both technically and musically by the present issue from Decca.

To begin with, the soloists in this new production are as fine as could be wished for; Elfride Trötschel is a glorious-voiced young soprano with a wide even range, and she has the ability to color a phrase that makes every note she sings interesting and musical. Walter Ludwig is an old timer who still has lots of voice. His years of experience plus an innate artistry make his contribution to the performance a notable one. And as for Josef Greindl, there are only a handful of basses who could equal his sure vocalism and none that could surpass it. Add to this some

of the finest choral singing on records and Ferenc Fricsay's sensitive and inspired direction and you have a performance that will stand for years to come.

Now all these artistic forces have not been let loose on something ordinary. Haydn's score deserves the adjective miraculous while von Swieten's libretto, based on James Thomson's poem, is a veritable gem. And even more impressive than the music, or perhaps one should say because of the music, is the lesson of the oratorio. We have come a long way since Haydn set these words and certainly we can not turn back, but there is a powerful sermon in the piece, one the present world could profit by immeasurably. Haydn did well to write *In Nomine Domine* at the beginning of the score and *Laus Deo* at the close.

Irving Kolodin's notes are excellent, the complete German-English text is included, and the recording is first class from start to finish.

W.

Haydn: Missa brevis ("Sancti Joannis de Deo"). Copenhagen Boys' and Mens' Choir and Chamber Orchestra of the Palace Chapel (Copenhagen) conducted by Mogens Wöldike, with Master Kurt Frederiksen (boy soprano) and Soren Sorensen (organ). One side, and **Haydn: (6) Songs for Mixed Voices.** Chamber Choir of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike, with Boris Linderud (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2064) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Aus dem Dankliede zu Gott; Der Augenblick; Die Harmonie in der Ehe; Die Beredsamkeit; Der Greis; Abendlied zu Gott.*

The Missa brevis Sancti Joannis de Deo or "Kleine Orgelmesse" was written by Haydn before 1778 for a chapel of the Order of the Brothers of Mercy at Eisenstadt. St. John of God, to whom the Mass is inscribed, was a Portuguese living in the 16th century and who founded the Order of the Brothers of Mercy.

The piece, brief though it is (playing time 17 minutes) may well be accounted one of Haydn's finest efforts in the field of sacred music. The limited vocal forces and the dainty orchestral accompaniment of six violins, 'cello, double bass and positiv organ add to its charm. Special note must be made of the graceful and serene *Benedictus* with its long organ introduction and soprano solo. The soloist, Master Kurt Frederiksen sings accurately, with good sense of pitch and his clear young voice adds much to the success of the performance.

The six "vocal quartets" were written some twenty years after the Mass and are the result of Haydn's acquaintance with the English madrigal. He said that these part-songs were "conceived *con amore* in happy hours without being commissioned." They certainly sound it; two of them, *Eloquence* and *Harmonious Marriage* are humorous, the latter having a touch of irony about it, particularly in view of

Haydn's own marital unhappiness.

Mogens Wöldike, whose name is rapidly becoming synonymous with the finest music and performances on records, directs both works with loving care; his singers and instrumentalists respond with superb performances. Add to this the fine recording achieved by the Danish HMV engineers and Karl Gieringer's authoritative notes, and you have another typically fine release from the Haydn Society. W.

Charpentier: Te Deum. One side, and **Charpentier: Marche de Triomphe.** And **Charpentier: Air de Trompette.** And **Charpentier: Leçon de Ténèbres.** And **Charpentier: Oculi Omnium.** (Sung in Latin). Claudine Collart, Jean Archimbaud (sopranos); Yvonne Melchior (alto); Pierre Giannotti (tenor); Louis Noguera (bass); Chorale of the Jeunesses Musicales de France and Orchestra of the Concerts Pasdeloup conducted by Louis-Martini, with Gerard Coursier, Gilbert Desprez (trumpets) and Marie-Louise Girod (organ). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2065) \$5.95.

Marc-Antoine Charpentier, whose opera *Medée* was noted in these columns a month or so ago, is beginning to receive considerable attention after virtually 250 years of neglect. The lack of interest in his music during his lifetime was due, in the main, to Lully's jealousy (Lully was no fool!) but there has been founded, quite recently, an International Charpentier Society, headed by a M. Guy-Lambert to correct this error of artistic judgment. Presumably we will be hearing more of Charpentier's music via records for one of the offices of the Society is located in Boston.

The *Te Deum* recorded here is a mightily impressive piece of music, very reminiscent of Handel (one should put this the other way, Handel is reminiscent of Charpentier). This is one of six *Te Deums* Charpentier wrote for various military victories, peace treaties and the like. It is a joyous work and full of vitality. In fact, the vitality, the sheer animal spirits of the music is one of its most notable features.

Two orchestral items, a *Marche de Triomphe* and a *Second Air de Trompette* follow and here again one is impressed. The scoring for high trumpet, usually associated with Bach and Handel some fifty years later, is really something to conjure with. Vitality is again the order of the day, and both pieces bounce along in magnificently extrovert fashion. The style of both orchestral pieces is more French than Italian. The second side also includes two choral works, one a setting of the Lamentations of Jeremiah (*Leçon de Ténèbres*), scored for two sopranos, alto, 'cello and organ. It is introspective, highly ornamental and always fascinating. The other, *Oculi Omnium*, is a motet whose prevailing mood is one of calm and deep rooted peace.

Of the performances one can only say they carry conviction and show the results of serious study.

The recording is good, marred occasionally by excessive echo. One welcomes the activities of the International Charpentier Society and looks forward to more music by this neglected master whose music is eminently worthy of revival. W.

Beethoven: Die Ruinen von Athen, Op. 113. (Sung in German). Annie Woudt (soprano); David Hollestelle (baritone); Netherlands Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra conducted by Walter Goehr. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1158) \$5.95.

To celebrate the grand opening of a fashionable theatre at Pesth, Hungary, on the 9th of February, 1812, Beethoven was commissioned to provide incidental music for two of Kotzebue's new melodramas, both of them self-consciously nationalistic in content and character. (August Friedrich Ferdinand von Kotzebue was a popular playwright in these years). Neither assignment appealed to the composer's highest instincts, but the promise of a substantial sum brought to bear the full play of his then amply developed talents. One of the two productions was *King Stephen: Hungary's First Benefactor*. The second was *The Ruins of Athens*. In the present recording, the text of those sections which Beethoven did not employ is omitted because their empty dialogue lends nothing to the essential musical experience. The work is not a play in the modern sense; Kotzebue called it a "Nachspiel," which is a kind of epilogue or masque. Concert Hall, in addition to copious program notes from which we have liberally borrowed, supplies also on a separate leaf a text in German with an English translation. This thoughtful gesture enables us to follow the singing and also understand what they are singing. Being none too well versed in poetry, nor too steeped in matters literary and theatrical, we have the feeling that this text is rather on the trashy side. For us, the music is the important thing, and once over the words, we prefer to just hear it.

Beethoven turned out some moments of fine music for this assignment. Well known is the *Marcia alla Turca*; occasionally heard is the *Overture*. But even better than these are some of the choral passages, which the present forces deliver with magnificent resource. The first duet is also good, and is sung splendidly by two young Dutch singers, possessed of fine voices well used. Beethoven scholars will find this disc exciting; those who enjoy oratorio-type music will find it pleasant. It is given a performance of strength and polish, highly inspired by Walter Goehr, and beautifully recorded. S.

Liszt: Missa Choralis. (Sung in Latin). Paris Select Choir conducted by René Leibowitz, with Giuseppe Englert (organ). 1-12" disc (*OC-OCS-37) \$5.95.

Franz Liszt, "Abbe Liszt," if you will, was one of the most extraordinary mortals ever to pen music—a virtuoso pianist, the generally acknowledged creator of the orchestral tone-poem, and ardent champion

of the then "new" music (Berlioz, Wagner et al) as well as an astonishing figure in extra-musical activities. All these attributes would tend to lead one to expect a Mass off the beaten track. With such a varied background it seems natural to look for humanity and understanding in a setting of the traditional text.

Not so! The Mass in A minor or "Missa Choralis" emerges in this, its first recording, as an undramatic, often dull work, that is singularly unmoving. Obviously composed for common liturgical use, the piece makes use of a mixture of simple declamation with a *cantabile* quality, of archaism and Gregorian idioms. It was originally written for mixed chorus *a cappella* but later Liszt provided it with an organ accompaniment and also gave it a more strictly contrapuntal character.

The picked chorus, sixteen voices assembled for this recording, is a fine one, and René Leibowitz, the conductor, turns in a performance that does full justice to the score. He is no magician, however, and consequently can not make more of the Mass than is there. The disc is, then, intended for those who admire Liszt, who have sung in the performances of the *Missa Choralis*, or curiosity seekers.

Oceanic has provided first rate sound, some modest notes and the complete text.

W.

OPERA

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde (complete). (Sung in German). Kirsten Flagstad (soprano); Blanche Thebom (mezzo-soprano); Ludwig Suthaus, Rudolf Schock, Edgar Evans (tenors); Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Rhoderick Davies (baritones); Josef Greindl (bass); Chorus of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 6-12" discs (manual sequence only) (*V-ALP-1030/5) \$43.80.

Kirsten Flagstad has become an almost legendary figure, even in her lifetime, largely because of her magnificent interpretations of the whole range of Wagner heroines. Among these heroic women, Mme. Flagstad's Isolde has always been singled out for special praise. Now all those who never had the opportunity to hear her in person and the legions who have been waiting for a good recording of her Irish princess, have here an imported performance that is well nigh flawless.

Naturally, interest centers around Mme. Flagstad (not because she would have it that way, it is only that she can not escape the consequences of her glorious voice) but there is more than a modicum of good singing in the supporting cast. Tristan, in the person of Ludwig Suthaus, is a noteworthy characterization. Herr Suthaus' Tristan has been on view before in the complete *Urania* recording (*UR-URLP-202), and it is salutary to observe the dif-

ferences due to different recording techniques, different Isoldes and different conductors! It is not possible to ascribe the great improvement to any one change, but this writer strongly suspects that Suthaus rises to the occasion because of Flagstad's inspired singing.

Others in the long cast are also capable; particularly fine is the King Mark of Josef Greindl. This reviewer has never heard Greindl in person, but judging from records it can be stated that he is a superior artist who always turns in a sincere and musically excellent performance. Blanche Thebom is a vocally secure Brangane but leaves a little to be desired from a dramatic point of view. Fischer-Dieskau's Kurneval lacks the poise and musical bearing one associates with the role.

Brooding over the whole performance is Furtwängler's sure and artistic direction. His orchestra, the hardworking and invariably excellent Philharmonia, plays in inspired fashion. The general tempo and atmosphere of the production are on the traditional side (which is, to this writer's way of thinking, the best for a performance that will have repeated hearings). High spots are *Isolde's Curse*, the *Liebenschacht* and, of course, the *Liebestod*. The recording is a good one technically, not extreme high-fidelity, but eminently listenable. No libretto is furnished and the discs are pressed in manual sequence. W.



Handel: Il Pastor Fido (complete). (Sung in Italian). Genevieve Warner, Lois Hunt, Genevieve Rowe (sopranos); Elizabeth Brown, Virginia Paris (contraltos); Frank Rogier (baritone); Columbia Chamber Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel, with Gino Smart (piano continuo), Sterling Hunkins (violincello) and Saul Ovcharov (violin). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4685) \$5.45.

Il Pastor Fido, Handel's second opera for London (the first was *Rinaldo*) was as great a failure as the first was a success. Many reasons have been advanced for its failure; libretto (admittedly earth-bound), poor cast (this could have been remedied) and so on. But the simple fact remains that, for this score, Handel just did not have it. Musically the piece is a string of arias, recitatives and ensemble numbers that do not come to life. Hearing this modern performance by Lehman Engel was, for one listener, a disappointment—it bred no desire to hear it again.

The cast is excellent in most respects. Mmes. Warner, Hunt, Rowe, Brown and Paris sing in engaging fashion, as does the sole male member of the group, Frank Rogier. Obviously considerable time went into the preparation of the opera, for it is well rehearsed and the singers are familiar with their parts. But all for nothing—*Il Pastor Fido* remains a stilted, uninspired *opera seria*. It is unfortunate that so much effort was expended on one of Handel's few dull operas, for the energy, time and money could have been better expended on a work such as *Rinaldo* or *Radimisto*.

Columbia has not helped prospective purchasers of *Il Pastor Fido* by only including the outline of the plot and a listing of the arias and recitatives. Surely more information concerning the genesis and style of Handelian opera would make for more intelligent and consequently more enjoyable listening. Then, too, one strongly suspects a great deal of the opera has been cut, "arranged" and otherwise tampered with; but no indication of such goings on is mentioned on the jacket. If this is the case, Columbia does both itself and the record industry a disservice by not playing fair with the buyer.

The recording is good from a technical angle. Better investigate this one first before buying. W.

VOCAL

Handel: Cantata for Bass Voice and Violoncello ("Dalla guerra amorosa"). Hans Olaf Hudemann (bass-baritone), August Wenzinger (violoncello) and Fritz Neumeyer (cembalo). One side, and **Telemann: Cantata No. 1 in C** ("Ihr Völker, hört!"). Hildegard Hennecke (alto), Gustav Scheck (flute), August Wenzinger (viola da gamba) and Fritz Neumeyer (organ). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7542) \$3.85.

One hesitates to apply the adjective "interesting" to a record these days for the word has picked up some undesirable connotations. "Interesting" has come to mean, on occasion, "one doesn't know what else to say" or, worse, it has become a word to suggest damning with faint praise.

And yet, interesting, in its true sense, is the best description for the music on this disc. It is not great music, but it is pleasant. Both works are fascinating from the historical angle and, for this reason alone, deserve a place in all collections of baroque music.

The secular cantata *Dalla guerra amorosa*, by the young Handel, is a melodious piece, very Italian in style (Handel's model was, of course, the great Carissimi) and is notable for the restraint and good judgment exercised by the youthful composer in setting the somewhat perfunctory lines. As sung by Hans Hudemann it emerges as both a musical and vocal treat, for Herr Hudemann sings with expression and good taste.

Telemann is remembered almost exclusively for the famous remark made by a member of the council of the St. Thomas Church when it was learned that both Telemann and a musician named Graupner declined the post of cantor. This anonymous gentleman said that since the best musicians were not available "müsste man mittlere nehmen." The "middling" in this case was none other than Johann Sebastian Bach! Neither Telemann nor his music have been able to live down this classic statement although there is a growing interest in his music nowadays (after all, Telemann didn't make nor

solicit the remark) and the cantata here recorded, *Ihr Völker, hört!* is craftsmanlike, melodious and bears a more than superficial resemblance to the Handel cantata on the other side. It is admirably sung by Hildegard Hennecke.

Fine recording here and comprehensive notes but no texts. W.

Catches and Glees of the English Restoration (Vol. II). The Glee Singers directed by John Bath. 1-12" disc (*AL-AL-3046) \$2.95.

A couple of years ago the first volume of these *Catches and Glees of the English Restoration* were released by Allegro (*AL-ALG-3008) and enjoyed a modest sale among students of that lewd period in English literature. Such gay and naughty songs found their way appropriately in the plays that abounded on the stage of that period. The present disc, as was the former one, is not suggested as entertainment for the unsophisticated.

"So This is Love" (The Story of Grace Moore). Kathryn Grayson (soprano) with Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Ray Heindorf. 2-7" discs in folder (*V-EOB-3000) \$3.15. 1-10" disc (*V-LOC-3000) \$4.67.

The Technicolor picture "So This Is Love" depicts the life of the glamorous Grace Moore from her early years to her debut at the Metropolitan Opera. Kathryn Grayson takes the part of Miss Moore in the picture, and the present LP disc contains eleven musical numbers from it. There is great variety to be sure—several operatic arias and some popular selections including *I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate*.

PIANO

Bach Recital. Gyorgy Sandor (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4684) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Fantasia and Fugue in G minor ("Great"); Toccata, Adagio and Fugue in C; Prelude and Fugue in D; Toccata and Fugue in D minor; Prelude and Fugue in A minor.

This splendid LP disc contains transcriptions for piano of several Bach organ works by Busoni, Liszt and Sandor. Sandor gives thrilling performances and Columbia has caught them with rare fidelity.

An Ania Dorfmann Recital. Ania Dorfmann (piano). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1758) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1758) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Papillons, Op. 2 (Schumann); Andante and Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14 (Mendelssohn); May Breezes (Mendelssohn); Spinning Song (Mendelssohn); (3) Ecossaises, Op. 72 (Chopin); Un Sospiro (Liszt); Sonatine (Ravel); Ricercare and Toccata (Menotti).

In arranging the recital to be found on this LP



disc, Miss Dorfmann doubtless had in mind an audience who would like highly refined selections in which delightful melodies abound in great profusion. The result is a most intimate recital that one may enjoy best in the quiet and seclusion of one's own home. As we listened to this record, we had the feeling that Miss Dorfmann was playing these lovely pieces just for us.

MISCELLANEOUS



Bach: Suite No. 4 in E-flat. One side, and **Bach:** Suite No. 5 in C minor. Lillian Fuchs (viola). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9660) \$5.85.

We are not quite certain why Lillian Fuchs has chosen to perform these Suites for 'cello on the viola (probably since the 'cello for which they were written is markedly different from today's instrument, she did not consider the instrumentation critical); but the admirable results she achieves wholly justify her performances. Generally, her playing tends toward a slight over-seriousness with somewhat too slow tempi. But the precision and formal excellence she maintains place her within the foremost rank of the few persons who have offered satisfactory recordings of these Suites.

The use of the higher pitched instrument, in this case, combined with Miss Fuch's solemnity of interpretation, produces a reading which sounds like the last possible abstraction of the dance melodies which form the basis for these works. And it is to those who would prefer this sort of approach over, say, the warmer, more rhythmically intense readings of Starker that Miss Fuchs' records are recommended.

C.

Tanidos de Guitarras. Luis Maravilla (guitar). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5194) \$5.95.

The Luis Maravilla of this recording is also the Lopez Tejera of the famous *Joys and Sorrows of Andalusia* (*WEST-WL-5135), the former name being his *nom-de-plume*, the latter being his true one and the name under which he composes. Half of this recording is devoted to Tejera's own works, which are generally wrought within the conventional Flamencan idiom. The others are, more or less, standard guitar pieces; and all are presented with a competence of which those who know the *Joys and Sorrows* record need not be assured. Maravilla, who has been concertizing since the age of twelve, is certainly pre-eminent in his profession, and is sonically done no injustice by the sparkling clarity of Westminster's recording.

C.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyrl-chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

• indicates LP 33 1/2 rpm.
• indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moes. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

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VOL. 21, NO. 8

OCTOBER, 1953

By mail to any address
\$1 per year

WE HAVE just been listening to one of the most unbelievable recordings to have come to our attention in a long while. It is the complete New Testament (Authorized King James Version). The reading is indescribably beautiful; this set will surely bring new meaning and new understanding of the Holy Word to those who hear it.

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NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning October 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

NEW LP RELEASES

Puccini: *La Bohème* (highlights). Rosanna Cartieri (soprano), Ferruccio Tagliavini (tenor), Cesare

Siepi (bass) with Orchestra of Radio Italiana (Turin) — Santini, 1-12" disc (*CE-A50143) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '53).

Leoncavallo: *I Pagliacci* (highlights). Carla Gavazzi (soprano), Carlo Bergonzi (tenor), Carlo Tagliabue (baritone) with Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana—Simionetto. One side, and Mancagni: *Cavalleria Rusticana* (highlights). Fernanda Cadoni (soprano), Achille Braschi (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of CETRA—Basile. 1-12" disc (*CE-A50144) \$5.95. (TNR Dec. '51 and Aug. '52).

Mozart: *Le Nozze di Figaro* (highlights). Alda Noni, Gabriella Gatti (sopranos); Jolanda Gardino (mezzo-sopranos); Italo Tajo (bass); with Orchestra of Radio Italiana—Previtali. 1-12" disc (*CE-A50141) \$5.95. (TNR Oct. '51).

Verdi: *Aïda* (highlights). Caterina Mancini (soprano); Mario Filippeschi (tenor); Rolando Panerai (baritone); Giulio Neri (bass); with Orchestra and Chorus of Radio Italiana—Guil. 1-12" disc (*CE-A50142) \$5.95. (TNR Feb. '52).

OVERTURES ON RECORDS

Weber: *Der Freischütz*—Overture. One side, and Gluck: *Alceste*—Overture. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4075) \$2.50.

Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture, Op. 62*. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One side, and Beethoven: *Die Wiehe des Hauses Overture, Op. 124* ("Consecration of the House"). Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4068) \$2.50.

Glinka: *Russlan and Ludmilla*—Overture. City of Birmingham Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. And Mendelssohn: *The Hebrides Overture, Op. 26* ("Fingal's Cave"). Hallé Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. And Offenbach: *Orpheus in Hades*—Overture. Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Weldon. One side, and Strauss: *Die Fledermaus*—Overture. And Borodin: *Prince Igor*—Overture. Hallé Orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3072) \$2.98.

Berlioz Overtures. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Paul Kletzki. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3071) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: *Beatrice and Benedict; Judges of the Secret Court, Op. 3; Benevenuto Cellini, Op. 23; The Corsair, Op. 21.*

ORCHESTRA



Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Rochester Orchestra conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3069) \$2.98.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4698) \$5.45.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7095) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8070) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5216) \$5.95.

The appearance of five new versions of any item in one month happens far less frequently than a total eclipse of the sun, and with five new "Eroica" Symphonies we thought it might be quite an idea to give the assignment to two of our seasoned reviewers without letting either know that the other was going to review the same works. The results appear below, and S. and W. will learn of this when they receive their copies of our October issue.—Editor.

With five new *Eroicas*, plus some worthy ones already in the catalog, to be considered, it may be well to remind our readers that there is more than one way to appraise a recording. Taking it from the listener's standpoint, there are several ways, we have found, that a listener listens to a recording. Some of them go through the music with a score in hand; some of them who know the music or know how they think the music should sound from having heard previous performances measure a recording by this standard—with cheers and approval when it coincides and with distaste when it does not. Others sit back and imagine they are in a concert hall—possibly placing themselves in a good seat of a concert hall they frequent—and listen to a recording as a concert hall experience. This last method of listening is indeed a good one, probably the most enjoyable, and probably the fairest from a critical viewpoint. It must be admitted that what we enjoy in an actual performance is sometimes considered

overwrought when heard on a recording. We often want a recording to be a nearly ideal statement of the score, one that will bear repeated hearings without becoming annoying. But how often do we hear the same work in a concert hall during one season?

For those who will listen to a recording of the *Eroica* in their home three or four times a year, we would say that the most invigorating performance is the new Horenstein. This man is highly regarded in European concert halls for his reading of the work and it is easy to understand why. Here is a deeply felt and highly dramatic interpretation of the score. Horenstein does no malice to the score, he is always in good taste, but he has a fervor and conviction which are compelling, to say the least. He favors slower tempi, not for the sake of being arbitrary, but because they are the result of his feeling for the music. The reproduction of this disc is superb in every detail and the orchestra plays beautifully. It was necessary, unfortunately, to break the second movement between sides. Never before had a symphony been written on so vast an architectural design or with so much dramatic and emotional intensity as the *Eroica*. It was an epoch-marking milestone and remains today a formidable work; it deserves a reading of imposing dimensions which conveys this awareness and the awe of the interpreting conductor.

For those who want this work laid on the line in the traditional manner, Leinsdorf is easily the best of all available recordings—and there are about seventeen available. His is the Toscanini-type of reading, with a bit more warmth, suppleness, and curve, and far better reproduction. Leinsdorf is indeed admirable in every respect, and for those who find Horenstein not to their liking, Leinsdorf will be their choice.

As for the others, Furtwängler has many good moments, but there are enough vagaries and distasteful individual touches to spoil what may have been a good concert hall performance. Scherchen is straightforward and does a generally good job, yet it is curiously lacking in profile—not as good as Leinsdorf—and his disc suffers from ugly and strident reproduction, sounds like smashing glass. This type of fidelity may be high and wide, but it is not handsome.

Beecham's recording is the most fascinating of them all. For a student, it will prove useful, for he clearly demonstrates how every bar of the music was written, with a clarity and logic that are a revelation. His woodwinds play with their usual exceptional beauty, and his distinction of dynamics, particularly between very soft, soft, and moderately soft, is remarkable. The over-all impression does not, however, convey the large proportions of the *Eroica Symphony*.

Our comparison recordings were the Toscanini and Walter, because there is a great preference for the Toscanini (*V-LM-1042) and because we have

* indicates LP 33 1/2 rpm.
† indicates 45 rpm.

always preferred Walter in this work (*C-ML-4228). Of all seven considered, Toscanini suffers the most feeble reproduction—this work should be re-recorded with better fidelity. Walter stands up well in reproduction with any of them, and we still like his reading the best, except possibly for the Horenstein.

One final interesting point: we checked the tempo, with a metronome, of all seven recordings of the third movement Scherzo. Our score is marked 116; this is how each takes it: Beecham 100, Horenstein 104, Walter 112, Scherchen 112, Furtwängler 116, Leinsdorf 120, Toscanini 132. Seven renowned conductors with different ideas. S.

The LP cornucopia spilled over with a vengeance this month and deposited five new recordings of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3 in E-flat* on the dealer's shelves.

Fortunately, insofar as space is concerned, two of the five may be dismissed somewhat summarily. Furtwängler's performance on *Urania* is a mannered one, full of erratic tempi and too individual concepts. The recording is also nothing to get excited about. Horenstein's effort on *Vox* is a reasonable one but suffers from distorted sound—the tympani sound like pistol shots and, in short, the record is not agreeable to the ear. *Vox* also achieves the distinction of being the only one of the five to break the slow movement in the middle, placing part on one side of the disc, the remainder on the other.

Of the other three, the Scherchen and Beecham recordings have some merit. Herman Scherchen, on *Westminster*, enjoys about the best sound. His reading of the score is a tempestuous one; he heightens many of the dramatic moments but never indulges in eccentricities or bad taste. His tempi are fairly uniform, and it is a fiery *Eroica* that emerges. Sir Thomas' performance is, as one can readily imagine, just the opposite. Sir Thomas has obviously made up his mind that there will be no nonsense about the *Eroica*. It is a four-square job, with little imagination, that might be easy to live with—if a little on the pedantic side.

The surprise, for those who may not have followed his work and career, comes with Erich Leinsdorf's truly superb reading. Here is a performance that strikes a happy medium between Scherchen's and Beecham's being more dramatic than the latter's, less so than the former's. For this reviewer's taste it is well-nigh perfect, being preferable to the "standard" Toscanini version. It is a straightforward reading, with perhaps more than ordinary emphasis on the brass (which is all to the good), and is further characterized by excellent phrasing, careful attention to detail and superior orchestral playing and recording.

An additional advantage accruing to the purchaser of the Columbia Entré record is the very modest

price—truly one of the best record buys of this or any year. W.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). One side, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93**. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4681) \$5.45.

Mendelssohn: Symphony No. 4 in A, Op. 90 ("Italian"). Vienna Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 4 in C minor** ("Tragic"). Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Otto Klemperer. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7860) \$5.95.

What a conductor can do to (or for) a score is something that is a never ending source of amazement. Just about every conductor has performed the Mendelssohn "Italian" Symphony, and it is now considered in that peculiar fringe of lighter music which excludes it from the greater masterworks. Most conductors perform the work, especially the end movements, as fast as they can execute the music—which is generally faster than their orchestras can execute all the notes. For the first time in our memory, which includes countless performances and recordings of the well worn "Italian," we have just heard all the notes in the score, and our profound thanks to Beecham for this feat. Beecham's whole approach to this score is radically different from any other we have heard. His evaluation of the music is honest and faithful to the composer's writing—not an approach that sets out to display the technical prowess of his orchestra. Beecham's tempo in the first movement is about 126 (for a dotted quarter); Klemperer's tempo runs between 138 and 144; and the celebrated Koussevitzky recording, while highly erratic, hovers around 160. Hearing Koussevitzky after Beecham is pathetic, if not disgraceful (a dollar for every note left out and a dime for every note unduly slightly by Koussevitzky would provide a handsome retirement fund for a record reviewer). As with the first movement, so with the others, including a remarkable clarifying of the final Saltarello. Even the third movement acquires a new lease on life by Beecham, who treats it, properly, as a minuet. The net result of the whole effort is a symphony of remarkable construction and greater beauty than most folks have ever heard in this work. The general effect is pastoral, and in Beecham's treatment, this work is hardly inferior to Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony. You must hear it to believe it. The coupling is a superb reading of the Beethoven Eighth; both works are clothed in magnificent reproduction, with the "Italian" deriving great benefit from the clarity of the recording.

Klemperer is a much admired conductor by this listener, but his "Italian" hews to a tradition exposed by Beecham as completely phony, nor is the Klemperer orchestra in the same league with Beecham's, nor is the reproduction. Klemperer's

"Tragic" Symphony is good, but so is van Beinum's on London (*L-LL-736) with better reproduction.

S.

Mozart: Deutsche Tänze Nos. 1-5, K. 600. And **Mozart: Adagio for English Horn, 2 Violins and Violoncello.** One side, and **Mozart: Adagio in B, K. 440a.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4055) \$2.50.

Haydn: St. Anthony Divertimento. One side, and **Haydn: Divertimento in G.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4066) \$2.50.

The London Baroque Ensemble under the direction of Karl Haas has specialized in music of the Baroque Period for a number of years and has made many very successful recordings. The two LP discs listed above are well up to the high standard set by this unique organization. Baroque Music is something that one likes or he doesn't, and so a word of caution is in order. If you are not familiar with this style of rhythm and melody, better try one of these records before you buy any.

Berlioz: Roméo et Juliette (complete). (Sung in French). Margaret Roggero (contralto), Leslie Chabay (tenor), Yi-Kwei-Sze (bass), the Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society directed by G. Wallace Woodworth, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 8-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-6011) \$10.29. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6011) \$11.44.

"No one, I suppose, will misunderstand the genre to which this work belongs . . ." Thus wrote Berlioz, tongue in cheek, in the preface to his Opus 17, the dramatic symphony *Roméo et Juliette*. Of course, misunderstandings have been rife since the work was first performed. This is neither the time nor the place to go into a discussion of the technical aspects of Berlioz' extraordinarily original and vivid conception. Suffice it to say that this magnificent music has two programs, both formal. The reader or owner of the discs is referred to Jacques Barzun's exceptionally informative notes that accompany the set, or, even better, to his biography of the composer, *Berlioz and the Romantic Century*.

The performance that has been captured on these two discs is one of unparalleled artistic and technical merit. Charles Münch, his soloists, chorus and orchestra play and sing with inspired insight and Berlioz' magical score has the success it deserves. Hearing the work in its entirety is a tremendous experience. Portions like the *Queen Mab Scherzo* and the *Concert et Bal*, taken out of context, still sound wonderful; but the effect when heard as part of the whole is virtually indescribable.

The Boston Symphony Orchestra has never sounded better. Its innate virtuosity serves it well in this complex music; and the superb brass section,

the wonderful winds and strings can only be described as magnificent! The soloists sing with feeling and expression doing justice to the composer's ideas. Miss Roggero's work in the *Prologue* is excellent and Leslie Chabay sings the *Scherzetto* (also in the *Prologue*) in a distinguished fashion. Yi-Kwei-Sze, as le Père Laurence, has the most difficult task and comes through with flying colors. His is a great voice and, even more than the other singers, seems to get inside the music. It is a vocally compelling and artistically superior performance.

RCA Victor's engineers, Pulley and Layton, have achieved the finest sound to date on records; and the set, in this reviewer's opinion represents the highest peak yet reached by the phonograph, both from a musical and from a technical viewpoint.

W.

Respighi: The Pines of Rome. One side, and **Respighi: The Fountains of Rome.** NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1768) \$5.14. 1-12" discs in album (*V-LM-1768) \$5.72.

Westminster, Mercury and RCA Victor seem to be playing a sort of musical "Can You Top This?" with Respighi's *Pines* and *Fountains of Rome*. Westminster started it all (TNR Mar. '53) with a magnificent recording and pretty fair performance; then came Mercury's effort (TNR June '53) with Dorati in another fine, if somewhat different approach both technically and musically; and now RCA has unleashed Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Orchestra on Respighi's scores, and he and the engineers have, literally, a Roman Holiday.

There can be no gainsaying the fact Toscanini is in his element in this music. All the theatricality and, in many instances, the genuine poetry of the pieces, are realized in masterly fashion. If ever music could be said to sound better than it really is (and one sometimes doubts whether this is possible), this is an outstanding instance.

Now there is another aspect of this issue that, when taken into consideration with some other recent releases by the same company, offers some food for thought. It seems to this reviewer (and to several other persons with whom he has spoken) that RCA Victor is deliberately embarking on a campaign to recapture the prestige that it once had in the field of good music. The old magic of "Red Seal" became dimmed in the last decade or so, but a series of issues such as make up the September release will go a long way to re-establish this pioneer company as a leader in the field. Just consider what it has done with this "album." In addition to technical accomplishments of the very highest order RCA has included twelve superb photographs of pines and fountains in Rome, each measuring 12"x12" and one spread of 12"x24". An informative and appreciative running commentary is supplied by Vincent Sheehan.

Truthfully, this writer has been an avid phonophile

for over twenty-five years, but he has never seen or heard anything to equal the sheer opulence of this set. The only comparable affairs, and in a more limited field are the Haydn Society's *Orfeo* and *Clavier Übung*.

What will owners of either of the previous recordings of this music do? There are two courses of action—close eyes and ears to this new release and be satisfied with what you have; or see and hear the new one and buy it. There seems to be no middle ground.

W.

Moussorgsky—arr. Ravel: *Pictures at an Exhibition*.

One side, and **Stravinsky**: *L'Oiseau de Feu*. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4700) \$5.45.

The pairing of these two works on one LP disc gives good value to the customer, but it also serves as a double-barrelled showpiece for the Philadelphia Orchestra, for both of these works are virtuoso vehicles for any symphony orchestra. That the Philadelphians do themselves proud is no surprise. Their technical finish and their tonal splendor in each work could well be the envy of any other conductor and orchestra in existence. The only room for improvement would be in the opening trumpet solo passages of the *Pictures*, which offers a rather unpleasant style and tone of trumpet playing. That is, however, a minor matter which is soon out of the way. Ormandy's reading of both these pieces is strictly in the supercharged, virtuosic, brilliant manner. This is particularly true of the *Firebird* Suite, which receives what we commonly call a concert performance as distinguished from a ballet performance style of interpretation. The admirable Dorati—Minneapolis (*ME-MG-50004) is quite in the ballet tradition, with more measured tempi and less interpretive freedom. Which style you prefer will determine which disc you will enjoy more. Our preference tends toward a concert-type reading and so towards Ormandy, whose first-chair men play with surpassing beauty. Where Dorati's disc is coupled with the Borodin *Symphony No. 2*, Ormandy has a more popular coupling in the *Pictures*.

Ormandy's performance of the Ravel orchestration of the *Pictures at an Exhibition* is a workman-like job which abounds in gorgeous orchestral sounds and magnificent fortissimo effects. Columbia has gotten about every decibel of sound in the grooves that existing equipment could possibly reproduce. This disc may give tracking trouble on some machines (at the very end of the side). It is an heroic effort which gives competitive versions quite a run for their money. Kubelik and Chicago (*ME-MG-50000) have recently been considered tops in *Pictures*; but their performance occupies both sides of a 12" disc. Kubelik's reading seems to be more carefully thought out than Ormandy's. Another *Pictures* is coupled with Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*, conducted by Guido Cantelli (NBC and Phil-

harmonia Orchestras respectively) (*V-LM-1719). This disc has never appealed to us. For all around effectiveness, performance, recording and coupling, we would recommend Ormandy.

S.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 5 in B, Op. 100. Danish

State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eric Tuxen, with Peter Ase (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-672) \$5.95.

The *Fifth Symphony* of Prokofiev was the first he wrote as a Soviet citizen. He had left his native country in his early twenties, preferring the free artistic life of the western world to the state-controlled artistic policy of the U.S.S.R. What prompted his return to the U.S.S.R. and subsequent adoption of Soviet citizenship in his early forties remains a moot point. Some say it was an awakening political conscience; others suggest that he realized that only by being firmly rooted in its own soil could his music find a settled style and serious purpose. There is no title or message in the *Fifth*. After composing *Alexander Nevsky*, Prokofiev was probably ready to indulge in a little pure symphonic thinking. The result is a work which is considered one of his greatest. While generally serious, there are many touches, as the music progresses, that are typically Prokofiev, and rather mischievous and humorous.

The present disc is the third recording to reach LP's. Rodzinski (*C-ML-4037) first recorded the work, followed by Koussevitzky (*V-LM-1045). Until now, Rodzinski's disc was the choice. As both the previous versions were made several years ago, the present recording would naturally have the edge in matters of reproduction. London has supplied some of its best quality, to make it a closed issue as far as reproduction is concerned. As for the performance, Rodzinski had many moments that compete vigorously with Eric Tuxen; Koussevitzky was rather too fussy and his disc is not as good as either of the others. Taking the disc as a whole, we would easily recommend the new Tuxen effort, as a sincere reading and a good reproduction. The "B" side of our copy had too much surface noise, so check your copy first—a good test spot is at the beginning of the last movement.

S.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 82. One side, and **Sibelius: Symphony No. 6 in D minor, Op. 104.** Stockholm Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Sixten Ehrling. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10142) \$4.85.

This disc is part of a series of five which contain all seven Sibelius symphonies. The present disc contains the first LP recording of the *Sixth*. As with the other performances, these two are splendid readings. Sixten Ehrling is Sweden's most brilliant young conductor, and he is thoroughly schooled in the traditions regarding interpretation of Sibelius symphonies. The Stockholm Radio Orchestra is considered one of the three finest in Scandinavia; their

previous recordings have been well received. Mercury's reproduction is of today's best, which makes this a highly desirable disc. We can recommend it without reservation, and believe it will be a long time before any other LP's offer finer recordings of these Sibelius symphonies. These two coupled on one disc at the price asked is also a good value.

Other than the *First* and *Second*, the *Fifth* is one of the most popular of Sibelius' symphonies. The composer claims any programmatic content is strictly secondary to the directly symphonic vein of the work; however, the annotators have written much about the probable programmatic content. The work was written in mighty troubled times for Finland, as well as for the composer, who was beset with physical difficulties. The Bolsheviks came to Jarvenpaa, with the Germans on their heels. During the war, many of Sibelius' neighbors were murdered; he was a prisoner on his own grounds. After finagling his way to Helsinki, where he suffered many privations, the liberating Germans brought an end to this sort of thing and Sibelius returned to his *Fifth Symphony*, as well as to sketching his *Sixth* and *Seventh*. The third and final version of the *Fifth* was completed in the autumn of 1919; the *Sixth* did not follow until February of 1923. Whatever the circumstances, this pair of symphonies will remain among the truly great creations in this form. S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 9 in D minor, Op. 125 ("Choral"). Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter, with Irma Gonzalez (soprano), Elena Nikolaidi (contralto), Raoul Jobin (tenor), Mack Harrell (baritone), and the Westminster Choir directed by John Finley Williamson. Three sides, and **Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F, Op. 93.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-186) \$12.11.

In the autumn of 1949 Columbia released Bruno Walter's recording of Beethoven *Ninth* with the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York, the Westminster Choir, and the soloists listed above. The critics for the most part praised Walter's reading very highly but were very much disappointed in the vocal section of the final movement. Despite this unfavorable criticism this version was favored by many music lovers, and it has been a steady seller through the years. Columbia has recently re-recorded the final movement with the same soloists and chorus with excellent results and this superior recording is included in the set listed above. Also the fourth side of the present set contains a fine recording of Beethoven *Symphony No. 8 in F* instead of Brahms' *Song of Destiny*, which was the filler for the earlier set. This is a marked improvement because the critics were as one in stating that the recording of the Brahms item was nothing of which anyone could be particularly proud.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Columbia has made a most unusual offer to those persons who have purchased the earlier set (*C-SL-156). If they will return the second record (*C-ML-4201) to Columbia Records, Inc., Dept. P, 1473 Barnum Ave., Bridgeport 8, Conn., they will receive without charge a copy of *C-ML-4697 containing the re-recorded choral movement. Please note that the older record must be returned directly to Columbia; do not take it to your local dealer, for this transfer must be made between the original purchaser and Columbia Records, Inc., at Bridgeport.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner").** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4693) \$5.45.

We believe that most music lovers will think that Bruno Walter's reading of these two popular Mozart symphonies are just about tops. He gives them everything he has including his loving care. The only possible criticism we can imagine is that in using such a large orchestra the results may seem to be a bit bigger than a Mozart symphony should really be.

Clair de Lune and other Popular Favorites. Andre Kostelanetz and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4692) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Clair de lune* (Debussy); *A Musical Snuff-Box* (Liadov); *Playing Around* (Stix—arr. Ormandy); *Barber of Seville*—Overture (Rossini); *The Little Train of the Caipira* (No. 4 of "Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2") (Villa-Lobos); *Pavane pour une infante défunte* (Ravel); *Der Rosenkavalier*—Waltzes (R. Strauss).

This LP disc is for Kostelanetz fans. The Maestro has selected some staples from the classical and near-classical repertory, some of which, such as *A Musical Snuff-Box* and *Playing Around*, often find themselves on children's symphony orchestra programs. He presents them in his usual ingratiating style.

Debussy: Rhapsody for Saxophone and Orchestra. Jules de Vries (saxophone) with the Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kloss. And **Debussy: Clair de lune.** Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kloss. One side, and **Debussy: Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra.** Helmut Schultes (piano) with the Frankenland State Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kloss. 1-12" disc (*LYR-LL-38) \$5.95.

First LP recordings of Debussy's *Rhapsody for Saxophone and Orchestra*, a work he wrote rather unenthusiastically on commission during the period of his maturity, and the *Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra*, an early work, with a nicely revitalized reading of *Clair de lune*, which one suspects has been thrown in just to show how it ought really to

be done, are combined on one of the most rewarding Debussy LP's to have yet occurred. Performances, throughout, are in the finest impressionistic tradition; present, also, is a fidelity of reproduction which, as in the case of all new Lyricord releases, is exceptional.

C.

Tchaikovsky: Capriccio Italien, Op. 45. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Suite No. 3 in G, Op. 55—Theme and Variations.** L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Carl Schuricht. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-640) \$5.95.

A number of other LP recordings are available of these well-known Tchaikovsky selections. The interest in the present disc lies in the fact that the orchestra is conducted by the distinguished and venerable Carl Schuricht who, despite his 73 years, is one of the most active and sought-after conductors in Europe. Some American music lovers may remember that Herr Schuricht visited the United States in 1929 when he filled a number of engagements with the St. Louis Symphony.

Mendelssohn: A Midsummer Night's Dream—Incidental Music. One side, and **Schubert: Rosamunde—Incidental Music.** Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-622) \$5.95.

We know that there are many versions of this popular Mendelssohn and Schubert music already available on LP discs; but because of the excellence of Beinum's performances and the fidelity of these London recordings we cannot help welcoming this new release. If you are thinking of adding these selections to your library you should at least listen to the present versions.

Wagner: Gotterdämmerung—Siegfried's Rhine Journey. One side, and **Wagner: Gotterdämmerung—Funeral March.** And **Wagner: Die Walküre—Magic Fire Music.** Württemberg State Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4072) \$2.50.

For the Wagner fans this little LP disc is a marvelous value. It contains three very popular selections, and they have been splendidly played and faithfully recorded.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Jose Iturbi (piano) conducting the RCA Victor Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1759) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1759) \$5.72.

In the April 1952 TNR, in reviewing this work played by Lili Kraus with the Vienna Symphony under Moralt (*VX-PL-7270), we said: "A complete hearing of this recording plus a number of comparisons (in part) with several other LP discs

of the work leaves us with the impression that this is quite the finest recording of the work we ever heard." That statement and the superlatives which followed can be repeated again, for we still think the Kraus disc is the best of the nine versions now listed. Several others are good, but none of them have the same measure of that intangible something which makes the Kraus so much more of a superb listening experience.

Iturbi plays this work with his usual clean, brisk, technically accurate style. It cannot be said that he does malice to the score, and there may be some who think his playing is a good statement of the Beethoven idiom. But to play a recording such as the Kraus side by side with the Iturbi will reveal a style and a subtlety of playing which is far more admirable. The matter of orchestral accompaniment is vastly on the side of the Kraus recording, where you hear a seasoned and resilient orchestra playing noticeably more attractively than does the RCA Orchestra under soloist Iturbi. RCA has supplied very forward reproduction, clear and fruitful; but even this seems to militate against the performance, for in the second movement the piano has no perspective; it is just too bold and close. Kraus' piano is more distant and the result is a more sympathetic tone and consequently a more satisfying statement of the expressive melody. Lili Kraus and Moralt both approach the rondo finale in a more relaxed way and in a less cut-and-dried fashion. The more we listened to the Kraus recording the more we were convinced of its superiority.

S.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco: Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra. Andres Segovia (guitar) with the New London Orchestra conducted by Alec Sherman. One side, and **Guitar Recital.** Andres Segovia (guitar). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4732) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Two Studies (Villa-Lobos); *Arada* and *Danza* (Torroba—arr. Segovia); *Fandanguillo* (Turina—arr. Segovia); *Rondo on a Theme by Fernando Sor* (Ponce—arr. Segovia); *Sonatina Meridional* (Ponce—arr. Segovia).

As we have written before, a reviewer's life is not a happy one and this is largely so because he must often listen to the tenth or twelfth recorded version of a set-piece in the repertory that has already been highly satisfactorily recorded several times previously. However, every once in a blue moon, something new, interesting and delightful comes along and peps us up no end. Such an item is the very lovely *Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra* that Castelnuovo-Tedesco composed especially for the renowned guitarist, Andres Segovia. It is certainly new to us, although it was written in 1939 shortly before the composer sadly left his native Italy; it is interesting because of the fine balance that is maintained between the solo instrument and the chamber orchestra that supplies the accompaniment; also the pleasing melodies make it truly delightful.

For those who have within their hearts a love for simplicity and beauty this little work should hold a particular charm. We enjoyed it thoroughly and do not hesitate to recommend it to all discerning music lovers.

The second side of this LP disc contains a short recital of solo numbers which have often appeared on the programs of Segovia's many successful concert appearances.

R.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: *Divertimento in E-flat, K. 563.* Jean Pougnet (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and Anthony Pini (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5191) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Trio No. 3 in E, K. 542.* One side, and

Mozart: *Trio No. 5 in G, K. 564.* Agi Jambor (piano), Victor Aitay (violin) and Janos Starker (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPLP-521) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Quartet in F, K. 370.* Harold Gomberg (oboe), Felix Galimar (violin), Gabriel Banat (viola) and Alexander Kouguell (violoncello). One side, and **Telemann:** *Sonata in C minor.* And **Telemann:** *Partita No. 5 in E minor.* Harold Gomberg (oboe) and Claude Jean Chiasson (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9618) \$5.85.

Mozart: *Quartet No. 8 in F, K. 168.* One side, and

Mozart: *Quartet No. 17 in B-flat, K. 458.* Griller String Quartet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-658) \$5.95.

Mozart: *Quartet No. 6 in B-flat, K. 159.* One side, and **Haydn:** *Quartet in F, Op. 3, No. 5.* Griller String Quartet. 1-10" disc (*L-LS-656) \$4.95.

Recently a vast number of chamber music records have arrived at the studio; among them are the five listed above. Most of this music has already been satisfactorily recorded. However, there are two items in the group that are new to the LP lists and are of more than passing interest. They are the very excellent recordings of Mozart's Quartets No. 6 in B-flat, K. 159 and No. 8 in F, K. 168.

Hindemith: *Sonata for Flute and Piano.* And **Guarnieri:** *Sonatina for Flute and Piano.* One side, and **Milhaud:** *Sonatina for Flute and Piano.* **Schaposchnikow:** *Sonata for Flute and Harp.* Sebastian Caratelli (flute), Gordon Manley (piano) and Ann Sacchi (harp). 1-12" disc (*NEW RECORDS NRLP-406) \$5.95.

The intellectual intricacies abounding through these four Sonatas certainly deserve a more detailed attention than we could give them here. Suffice it then to say that, after a one-hearing acquaintance-ship, they all appear to be proficiently conceived, each in itself unique; and the four together will prove a handsome addition to any flute devotee's library.

Sebastian Caratelli needs little introduction to those who know their flutists; for those who do not,

he is a gentleman who plays with subtlety, maturity and persuasion. His co-performers do not fall below his standards in any way, and all combine to make a vital addition to the small selection of flute music on records. It may interest some, also, to know that the largest selection of flute music on LP has been issued by New Records, Inc. (not connected with this publication).

C.

Beethoven: *Trio in D, Op. 70, No. 1 ("Ghost").*

One side, and **Beethoven:** *Trio in E-flat, Op. 70, No. 2.* Albeneri Trio: Erich Itor Kahn (piano), Giorgio Ciompi (violin) and Benar Heifetz (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-10139) \$4.85.

Beethoven: *Trio in G, Op. 9, No. 1.* One side, and

Beethoven: *Trio in D, Op. 9, No. 2.* Jean Pougnet (violin), Frederick Riddle (viola) and Anthony Pini (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5198) \$5.95.

Beethoven: *Quartet in D, Op. 18, No. 3.* One side, and

Beethoven: *Quartet in C minor, Op. 18, No. 4.* Barylli Quartet. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5211) \$5.95.

Beethoven: *Quintet in E-flat, Op. 16.* Leopold Mittman (piano), Harry Schulman (oboe), David Weber (clarinet), Elias Carmen (bassoon) and Fred Klein (French horn). One side, and

Beethoven: *Quartet in E-flat, Op. 16.* Leopold Mittman (piano), Arnold Eridus (violin), David Mankovitz (viola) and George Ricci (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*STRAD-STR-616) \$5.95.

All of the Beethoven chamber music on the above four LP discs is already represented by adequate recordings in the present catalogs. We are therefore merely listing these releases so that our readers may be made aware of their availability.

Schubert: *Sonata in A minor ("Arpeggione").* One side, and **Schumann:** *Fantasiestücke, Op. 73.* And

Schumann: (3) *Romanzen, Op. 94.* Maurice Gendron (violoncello) and Jean Françaix (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-654) \$5.95.

Schubert: *Sonata in A minor ("Arpeggione").*

Enrico Mainardi (violoncello) and Guido A. Borciani (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7539) \$3.85.

Now we have five recorded versions of Schubert's *Sonata in A minor* for 'cello and piano, and who shall say which is the best? We were very favorably impressed with the London recording by Maurice Gendron and Jean Françaix.

Franck: *Quintet in F minor.* Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8220) \$5.70.

On this LP disc the Hollywood String Quartet with Victor Aller at the piano gives a superb performance of Franck's *Quintet in F minor.* The balance between the piano and the quartet is ideal, and the reproduction is certainly of the best. We prefer this version to the London recording by the Chigi Quintet.

OPERA



Wagner: Der fliegende Höllander (complete). (Sung in German). Annelies Kupper (soprano); Wolfgang Windgassen, Ernst Häflinger (tenors); Sieglinde Wagner (contralto); Josef Metternich (baritone); Josef Greindl (bass); RIAS Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Ferenc Fricsay. 3-12" discs in album (*D-DX-124) \$17.55.

This is the second complete recording of Wagner's *Der fliegende Höllander*. The other, an early issue by Mercury (TNR June '50) is surpassed on all counts. *The Flying Dutchman* was first performed on 2 January 1843 at Dresden with Wagner conducting. Since that time, although subsequent operatic scores by others and even by Wagner himself have made it seem "old-fashioned," it has still retained a degree of popularity.

Decca's cast, under Ferenc Fricsay's able direction, perform excellently. In the title role, Josef Metternich acquires himself in creditable fashion. One could imagine a more inspired characterization; nevertheless Herr Metternich is always convincing, and his robust baritone is equal to all the demands he places on it. Daland, in the person of the ever reliable and always vocally excellent Josef Greindl, is a sterling portrayal. This column has commented before concerning his obvious gifts, and he uses them with intelligence in this performance. Erik is sung by the young Wolfgang Windgassen, and it is a superior job, being, along with Greindl's Daland, vocally the best in the set. Ernst Häflinger, as the steersman, is neither good nor bad, only undistinguished. His vocal equipment is limited.

Annelies Kupper does well as Senta. Her singing of the ballad *Traft ihr das Schiff* is distinguished by a youthful voice and a genuine understanding of the role. These features carry through her whole performance. Sieglinde Wagner's Mary is an example of what a sincere artist can do with a minor role.

The chorus, which plays an essential role in the proceedings, and the orchestra which is also all-important, sing and play with verve and intelligence. The score, about which a contemporary of Wagner's complained that "the wind . . . blew out at you whenever you opened (it)," is made to sound like it was "born on the sea and still has its home on it" thanks to Fricsay's earnest direction.

The sound is good, and mention must be made of the fine booklet Decca has supplied that includes an exhaustive analysis of the opera by Ernest Newman, a note on the opera by Louis Untermeyer, and a fine new translation of the libretto. There are also illustrations, both pictorial and musical that, combined with its many other merits, make the album a desirable one.

W.

Verdi: Otello (complete). (Sung in Italian). Herva Nelli, Nan Merriman (sopranos); Ramon Vinay (tenor); Giuseppe Valdengo (baritone); mixed chorus directed by Peter Wilhousky; boys' chorus directed by Eduardo Petri; and NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Arturo Toscanini. 12-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-6107) \$14.89. 3-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6107) \$17.16.

Otello is one of those landmarks of the lyric theatre that seldom receives a performance that does justice to Verdi's great conception. Some of the difficulty nowadays lies in being unable to obtain the services of a capable tenor. A strong hand at the orchestral helm is also required. Next in importance are a baritone and soprano who can realize the possibilities of Iago and Desdemona (no small order!).

The present recording, made at the broadcasts of December 6th and 13th, 1947, does not have a good tenor. Ramon Vinay's voice is unmusical to begin with, and he screams his way through the opera in a manner that is most unsatisfactory to this reviewer. Above an "A" his voice acquires a wobble that is decidedly unpleasant. It is to his credit that he tries, but his heroics are not based on any genuine understanding of the role. His later recording of some of this music for Columbia (TNR May '52) is a little better. Valdengo is a pretty good Iago but he does not have too much voice. He is, however, superior to his counterpart in the complete *Urania* set. His conception of the role is good and his type of baritone (i.e. a genuine baritone, not one of the Anglo-Saxon or Nordic bass-baritones so popular these days) is musically suited to the part. Herva Nelli is an excellent Desdemona whose fine lyric-dramatic soprano is always handled with intelligence, both dramatically and musically. The minor roles are in minor hands.

The real stars of the performance are Arturo Toscanini and his NBC Orchestra. The orchestral music has never sounded so thrilling, and it points up the great shame that a more competent *Otello* could not have been engaged. And yet, in spite of the many vocal and dramatic inadequacies, this recording stands as the best *Otello* on LP because of Toscanini. It is superior to the other complete recording on *Urania* (TNR May '52) and to the excerpts on Columbia.

RCA Victor's engineers have done an amazing job in refurbishing the six-year-old tapes (or more likely, acetate discs), and the sound is very good. The packaging, in accordance with what seems to be RCA's new policy (i.e. to regain its leadership in the record field) is thoughtful and intelligent for a libretto showing Italian text, English translation and Shakespearean source, notes on the opera and a comprehensive version of the story are all included.

W.

Singers of the Golden Age (Vol. I). Emmy Destinn (soprano) with accompaniments. 2-12" discs in album (*CLASSIC EDITIONS CE-7001) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Aida*—Ritorna vincitor; *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Voi lo sapete; *Pagliacci*—Balatella; *Lohengrin*—Du Armste; *Lohengrin*—Euch lüften; *Bartered Bride*—Marie's aria (Act I); *Nozze di Figaro*—Porgi amor; *Carmen*—Seguidilla; *Carmen*—Chanson bohème; *Fliegende Holländer*—Traft ihr das Schiff; *Zauberflöte*—Ach, ich fühl's; *Mignon*—Prayer; *Madama Butterfly*—Sai cos ebbe cuore; *Madama Butterfly*—Tu, tu, piccolo iddio; *Freischütz*—Wie nahte mir der Schlummer; *Freischütz*—Und ob die Wolke; *Dalibor*—Aria (Act II) (Smetana); *Tannhäuser*—Dich teure Halle; *Trovatore*—D'amor sull'ali rose; *Faust*—Air de bijoux; *Alleluja* (Hummel); *Aus der "Hohelied"* (Mendelssohn); *Slovakia Pisen* (Kovarovic); *Robert der Teufel*—Eh ich die Normandie verlassen (Meyerbeer); *Robert der Teufel*—Geh' sprach sie zu mir; *Russalka*—Aria (Act I); *Damon* (Stange).

These discs contain twenty-seven recordings that were made in Europe in the early 1900's, most of which were never made available generally in America. They are "antiques" with the surface noise that was inherent in recordings of that period. While the accompaniments are quite feeble, the superb voice of Emmy Destinn comes through with amazing fidelity—the art of this great dramatic soprano is truly present. Many of us who can remember the Metropolitan Opera prior to 1920 (Miss Destinn retired from the Metropolitan in that year) can recall her many outstanding performances with that organization. For us these recordings will bring back many thrilling memories, and for the younger generation they will provide an introduction to one of the greatest operatic artists of the present century.

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Victoria de los Angeles (soprano); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Leonard Warren, Robert Merrill (baritones); Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw; and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. Twelve sides, and **Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana** (complete). (Sung in Italian). Zinka Milanov (soprano); Carol Smith (contralto); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor); Robert Merrill (baritone); Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw; and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 12-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-6106) \$14.89. 3-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6106) \$17.16.

Utilizing the same techniques and artistic conscience that made their previous domestic operatic recordings in this series (*Rigoletto*, *Carmen* and *Il Trovatore*) so successful, RCA Victor now releases the operatic twins, *Cavalleria Rusticana* and *I Pagliacci*. The casts are the best available to the company and the issue must be accounted a success.

In *Cavalleria Rusticana* the principals are Milanov, Bjoerling and Merrill. Milanov is a superb Santuzza, for she brings an air of credence to her delineation of the unhappy creature. Vocally, of course, her golden voice is more than equal to the demands of the part so her characterization, with Mascagni's and Cellini's help, emerges as three dimensional. Bjoerling is a vocally secure Turiddu, a little restrained perhaps, but for continued listening this could readily be an asset. Robert Merrill is an adequate, if not sensational Alfio—the role is not a fat one, but he gives his one aria all he has.

I Pagliacci is notable for the casting of Victoria de los Angeles in the role of Nedda. She sings the part for the first time here and her début is a most successful one. Vocally, she has all the characteristics one associates with the part: she is sultry, scornful and passionate by turns and always convincing. Her voice, a soprano of uncommon range, is one of the finest to be heard today. Leonard Warren's big voice is excellent for Tonio and his performance is considered and uniformly good. Robert Merrill, sounding curiously like Warren, is a satisfactory Silvio. Jussi Bjoerling's Canio is also a good conception and, like his Turiddu, a restrained one. He does, however, loosen up in the finale and the work closes with all the stops out.

The Shaw Chorale sings with all its wonted perfection and Renato Cellini's direction is always sane and musical. The recording, the accompanying notes (by W. H. Auden, no less) and packaging are worthy of the highest praise. Previous recordings of these two war horses, notably Columbia's and Cetra's, are not in the same class technically and have little, if any, more to offer vocally. W.

Beethoven: Fidelio—Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin? (recit.); Komm Hoffnung (aria) (Act I). One side, and **Weber: Oberon**—Ozean, du Ungeheuer! (recit.); Wolkenlos strahlt jetzt (aria) (Act II). (Sung in German). Christel Goltz (soprano) with the Bavarian State Orchestra conducted by Robert Heger. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4058) \$2.50.

Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro (excerpts). (Sung in Italian). Elfriede Trötschel, Annelies Kupper (sopranos); Josef Greindl (bass); with orchestral accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4065) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: Non più andrai (Act I); Venite inginocchiatevi (Act II); Porgi amor (Act III); Tutto e disposto (recit.), Aprite un po' quegl' occhi (aria) (Act IV).

Two very fine and moderately priced discs appear on Decca's lists this month. The first of them features Christel Goltz (who will be remembered as the excellent Salomé in Strauss' opera of the same name recorded by Oceanic (*OCLP-302). Miss Goltz sings two of the most famous arias for dramatic soprano, Beethoven's *Abscheulicher, wo eilst du hin?* and Weber's *Ozean du Ungeheuer!* and, although she has stiff competition from previous recordings

(notably Flagstad's 78 rpm discs) she comes through with flying colors. Her sense of style and her vocalism are equally sure, while the youthfulness of her voice adds an unexpected warmth and humanity to the, at times, formidable music. Somewhat distant but musically excellent orchestral accompaniments are supplied by the veteran Robert Heger and the Bavarian State Orchestra.

The other disc, containing four arias from Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* is a veritable treasure trove. Outstanding is Elfride Trötschel's singing of Susanna's wonderful *Venite inginocchiatevi*. Here the essential youthfulness both of her voice and her nature make the sparkling music come to life exquisitely. It is doubtful whether the music has ever been sung on records to better effect. Annelies Kupper does very well indeed with La Contessa's *Porgi amor* but this reviewer has been spoiled by Victoria de los Angeles' fabulous recording on a discontinued (?) 78 rpm disc. None the less it is still a creditable job. There remains Figaro's two arias, *Non più andrai* and *Aprite un po' as* sung by Josef Greindl. Technically, spiritually and stylistically Herr Greindl is a perfect Figaro. The only fault (and it is late in the day to reproach him for the fact) is that he is a bass, singing music written for baritone. The differences in timbre between the two voices are too much for this listener—he doesn't like bass Figaro's or Don Giovanni's. Apart from this personal stricture, the music is sung to perfection. Superb orchestral accompaniments and recording make this little record a real bargain at its modest price.

W.

George London Sings Mozart. George London (bass-baritone) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4699) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *The marriage of Figaro*—Se vuol ballare; La vendetta; Non più andrai; Vendro, mentr' io; Aprite un po' quegl' occhi. Mentre ti lascio, o figlia, K. 513; *Per questa bella mano*, K. 612; *Rivolgete a lui lo sguardo*, K. 584.

Eleanor Steber Sings Mozart. Eleanor Steber (soprano) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Bruno Walter. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4694) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Der Schauspieldirektor*—Bester jüngling; *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*—Taurigkeit; *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Dove sono; *Die Zauberflöte*—Ach, ich fühl's; *Don Giovanni*—In quali eccessi . . . mi tradi quest' alma ingrata; *Cosi fan tutte*—Per pietà ben mio perdona; *Don Giovanni*—Non mi dir, bell' idol mio.

It would be interesting to know the reasoning behind the making of these two records. Aside from

the prospect of selling them, that is. Neither Miss Steber nor Mr. London seem to have any idea of how to sing Mozart. And yet, here is Bruno Walter, one of the best of conductors, noted for his Mozart readings, directing the orchestra! One is astonished that he did not do more to have the performances worthy of the music. Perhaps the fact that he did not also implies that he was not permitted to make them so.

George London, a bass, has no business (vocally) singing Figaro or the Count Almaviva, for these roles are for baritone. Neither is his temperament suited to either character. The music lies a little too high for his voice, and, as a result, the singing tends to be monotonous and unmusical. Most successful, and that in a wooden sort of way, is the vendetta aria of Dr. Bartolo which, incidentally, is written for bass. The three concert arias on the other side are also trying to listen to; for here, too, he is well beyond his depth. The tempi, in all instances, is very slow, and it is hard for this reviewer to believe the idea was Bruno Walter's.

Miss Steber essays the arias of a group of characters from several Mozart operas that would tax the musical imagination and vocal equipment of the greatest of sopranos. It is not so much that she is unsuccessful—one wonders why she made the attempt. Here again, one is amazed that Bruno Walter could not have exercised some restraining influence. There is, in addition, some slovenly orchestral playing.

The recording in both instances is reasonably good. No texts are supplied, the annotator merely contenting himself with outlining the situation for the aria and giving an English version of the words.

W.

CHORAL



Thompson: The Testament of Freedom. Male Chorus of the Eastman School of Music and the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. One side, and **Hanson: (4) Songs from "Drum Taps."** Chorus of the Eastman School of Music and the Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson, with David Meyers (baritone). 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40000) \$5.45.

Though not included in the list of Olympian Series recordings, this first volume of Mercury's American Music Series fully possesses the remarkable fidelity of the Olympian line, being recorded with the same technical facilities. It is, indeed, one of the finest discs Mercury has produced for the hi-fi devotee, containing a stunning example of the

impressive impact of a massive chorus and orchestra performing music that contains more crescendos than Tschaikovsky would ever dream of writing into a single work.

Not being jingoistic, as one might suspect from the title, Randall Thompson's *The Testament of Freedom*, a setting of four passages from the writings of Thomas Jefferson, is actually more effective on a linguistic level than is, for example, *Ein Deutsches Requiem* when it is sung in English. Mr. Thompson's work manages to be impressive without being melodramatically sensational and, from a technical standpoint, is quite well-wrought.

Howard Hanson's *Songs from "Drum Taps"* almost defies musicological description. How would one, for example, describe the aesthetic appeal of a *Concerto for Pneumatic Drill and Football Band*? Though without the subtlety of the aforementioned hypothetical work, one must not deny it the attribute of being, of its type, quite pure. C.

Bach: Cantata No. 146 ("Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal"). (Sung in German). Anny Felbemeyer (soprano); Erika Wien (alto); Hugo Meyer Welfing (tenor); Norman Foster (bass); Choir of the Bach Guild and the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska, with Kurt Rapf (organ and cembalo). 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-525) \$5.95.

This is the first recording of one of Bach's finest cantatas. *Cantata No. 146* "Wir müssen durch viel Trübsal" is a large work, and from the elaborate overture (based, incidentally, on the opening movement of the *D Minor Clavier Concerto*) to the resounding final chorale, interest and musical inspiration never flag.

The composition is thought to have been written sometime after 1730, while Bach was in Leipzig. The facts pointing to this time of composition are rather cute and are outlined in some detail in the jacket notes. The cantata was written for the third Sunday after Easter and is a joyous work throughout despite its somewhat forbidding title, the English version of which is "Through bitter tribulation we enter into God's Kingdom".

The soloists range from fair to very good. Miss Wien, the alto has a bright pleasing voice that she uses with understanding and a sense of fitness. Her aria, *Ich will nach dem Himmel zu*, is delivered with clarity and style. The ever welcome and really gorgeous soprano of Anny Felbemeyer is heard in a lengthy recitative and the aria *Ich säe meine Zähren*. Both sections take on an added glow through the magic of her silvery vocalism. Hugo Welfing, a somewhat wooly-voiced tenor and basso Foster, while good singers, are a bit of a let down after the superb Felbemeyer.

Felix Prohaska conducts with a sense of propriety born of many years of experience. The spirit he breathes into the performance is one of a sort of classic joy that is eminently proper. His chorus sings accurately and spiritedly—one could ask no more.

Vanguard has supplied crystal clear recording, texts and notes.

W.

VOCAL



Erna Berger Sings. Erna Berger (soprano) accompanied by Michael Rauchisen (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9666) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Wir wandelten, Vorüber, Mein wundes Herz verlangt, Der Tod das ist die kühle Nacht, Lerchengesang, Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer, An eine Aolsharfe, Wiegenlied (Brahms); (6) Songs to poems by Clemens Brentano, An die Nacht, Ich wollt' ein Sträusslein binden, Säusle liebe myrte, Amor, Lied der Frauen, Als mir dein Lied erklang (R. Strauss).*

One has heard quite a lot, via blurbs on record jackets, concerning Erna Berger's outstanding gifts as a lieder singer but in all cases the discs were so poorly recorded that it was possible to form only the vaguest opinions. Now, with this new Decca recording, Miss Berger more than sustains the exalted reputation claimed for her in this field.

The eight songs of Brahms, covering a period of about twenty-six years, have been selected wisely, for they offer no drastic contrasts and make an excellent group both for auditor and singer. There are two familiar songs, *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer* and the classic *Wiegenlied*—the remaining songs, while not altogether unfamiliar, are infrequently heard.

The Strauss songs are settings of poems by Clemens Brentano (much favored in some quarters) and are characteristic of the somewhat over-ripe late romanticism the composer affected. They date from 1919.

Miss Berger has never sounded better than she does on this disc. All the remarkable expressive qualities of her unique voice are brought to play on the music with unforgettable effect. Her voice, the light, clear lyric soprano that record collectors and concertgoers the world over have come to know and admire is as fresh and youthful today as it was twenty years ago.

Decca, while supplying copious notes, has neglected to give the texts, an unforgivable omission insofar as this corner is concerned. Also, two of the Brahms songs are marred by tape-slip that gives the piano accompaniment a distressing "wow"—this, too, is inexcusable. Otherwise the recording is good, especially of the voice.

W.

A Song Recital Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-10" disc (*L-LS-568) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: (5) *Melodies populaires grecques* (Ravel); (2) *Chansons populaires grecques* (Trad.); *Automne*, Op. 18, No. 3 (Fauré); *Mandoline*, Op. 58, No. 1 (Fauré); *Soir*, Op. 83, No. 2 (Fauré); *Le Vaincu* (Aubert); *Le Visage penché* (Aubert).

This attractive disc serves to introduce Irma Kolassi, a gifted young mezzo-soprano, in a program of French songs, although one side of the record has a strong Greek flavor.

The first side is devoted to the works of teacher and pupil. Gabriel Fauré is an acknowledged master of the French song, and the three chosen by the soloist are representative of his considerable art. *Automne*, *Mandoline* and *Soir* are sufficiently familiar to need little comment here—they are typically Gallic in mood, a sort of musical realization of Watteau's paintings. The pupil, Louis Aubert (1877-) is represented by two songs that will, in all probability, be new to most listeners, *Le Vaincu* and *Le Visage penché*. Both songs struck this reviewer as being a bit on the pathological side, but in all likelihood they require several hearings to reveal all their meaning. Nonetheless, one was not tempted to repeat them.

Side two contains *Cinque melodies populaires grecques* as arranged by Maurice Ravel and arrangements (by two other musicians) of two traditional Greek songs. Here is music well off the beaten track that stimulates the imagination and whets the appetite.

Miss Kolassi sings the music in a fine, clear mezzo that is warm and engaging. A good sense of style and excellent method add to the listener's enjoyment. The accompaniments by Mlle. Jacqueline Bonneau are models of taste and musicianship. Good recording, somewhat flowery notes and no texts complete the offering.

W.

Spanish Music from the Court of Ferdinand and Isabella. Soloists and instrumentalists of Pro Musica Antiqua. 1-12" disc (*EMS-219) \$5.95.

Banchieri: Festino. Primavera Singers of the Pro Musica Antiqua, with Blanche Winograd (virginals). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-516) \$5.95.

Handel: Cantata for Solo Voice ("Nell dolce dell' oblio"). And **Handel: Sonata in C for Recorder, Harpsichord, Viola da Gamba.** One side, and **Handel: Trio Sonata in F for Recorder, Violin, Harpsichord, Viola da Gamba.** And **Handel: Sonata in D minor for Recorder, Harpsichord, Viola da Gamba.** Soloists of the Pro Musica Antiqua. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-515) \$5.95.

The Pro Musica Antiqua, probably the finest performing group for Medieval and Renaissance music, offers now the fourth in their projected forty-volume

anthology for EMS records. This release of undeservedly neglected Spanish music fully maintains their fine standards. (They could hardly do more!)

The Primavera Singers (a part of the Pro Musica Antiqua) have given us the first recorded music of Banchieri, and the first complete recorded madrigal-comedy (a group of 16th century vocal forms—madrigals, canzonettes, villanelles, etc.—having some slight plot). *Festino*, which is designed to be sung "on the evening of Fat Thursday before Supper," has interspersed throughout it virginals interludes (not part of the original, but in keeping with the spirit of the work, and adding to the impression of authenticity). Had the Primavera Singers existed and performed in the 16th century, they probably would have been lauded for their excellence. Therefore, this faithful performance at 300 years distance from the music is, indeed, an artistic rarity.

The Pro Musica Antiqua's recording of three Handel works is as fine as the first two records we have considered, and is to be, therefore, unqualifiedly recommended.

Music of Poland (Vol. II). (7) Folk Songs. Mazowsze Choral Ensemble with orchestra. One side, and Lutoslawski: **Little Suite for Chamber Orchestra.** Chamber Orchestra of the Polish Radio conducted by Jerzy Kolaczkowski. And **Lutoslawski: (6) Children's Songs.** Janina Godlewska (mezzo-soprano) with the Symphony Orchestra of the Polish Radio conducted by Witold Lutoslawski. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6013) \$5.95.

This LP disc will be of primary interest to those of Polish origin. The first side contains seven Polish folk songs and the second side contains a short orchestral suite and six songs for children; both the suite and the music for the songs were composed by the contemporary Polish musician Witold Lutoslawski. The six songs are based on poems by present-day Polish writers

Love Songs for a Late Evening. Portia Nelson (vocal) with the Norman Paris Trio. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4722) \$5.54.

CONTENTS: *Get Out of Town; My Ship; Once in a Blue Moon; The Gentleman is a Dope; Come Away with Me; Love for Sale; No Lover; If Love Were All; Just Love; My Love Is a Wonderer; Who Wants to Fall in Love; One Life to Live.*

Portia Nelson is the quintessence of sophistication. Her presentation of a song is in the manner that appeals to the coterie of cafe society that frequent the supper clubs on the upper east side in New York City. We mention this as a warning. You will either think that Miss Nelson's renditions are superb or will stop the record before it is more than a quarter finished. We have no opinion because night life stopped for us well before midnight many years ago.

Anna Russell Sings! Again? Anna Russell (comedianne) with piano accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4733) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *The Ring of the Nibelungs* (An Analysis); *Introduction to the Concert* (By a Women's Club President); *How to Write Your Own Gilbert and Sullivan Opera*.

Since the release of her first record, *Anna Russell Sings?* (TNR Dec. '52), there has been an insistent demand for more recording of the repertoire of this British comedianne; and when Miss Russell gave another concert at Town Hall (April 23, 1953) for the benefit of the Third Street Music School Settlement, Columbia recorded it and has issued the present disc.

Anyone who liked Miss Russell's first disc or who saw her do the bit imitating a Women's Club President on Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" TV show will want this record. If you do not know Miss Russell but enjoy hearing fun poked at musical snobs, we suggest you'll split your sides at this one.

PIANO



Chopin Recital. Dinu Lipatti (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4721) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Sonata No. 3 in B minor, Op. 58; Barcarolle in F-sharp minor, Op. 60; Nocturne No. 8 in D-flat, Op. 27, No. 2; Mazurka No. 32 in C-sharp minor, Op. 50, No. 3.*

Since Lipatti's untimely death in 1950 there has sprung up in America what might be called a Lipatti Cult. Members of this group are more than anxious to obtain all of the recordings made by this truly great artist. As far as they are concerned it is only necessary to mention that another Lipatti record is available. Those music lovers who have not made his acquaintance might do so very pleasantly by listening to the present release.

Early English Keyboard Music. Robert Donington (viola da gamba); Geraint Jones (organ); Thurston Dart (harpsichord); Elizabeth Goble (harpsichord and virginals). 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-712/3) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Variations on the Carman's Whistle, The Earl of Salisbury's Pavan and Galliard, Pavana Bray and Galliarda Bray, Praeludium* (Byrd); *Wal-singham Variations, The King's Hunt, Queen Elizabeth's Pavan, In Nomine* (Bull); *Pavana Dolorosa and Galliarda Dolorosa* (Philips); *The Lord's Masque, New Noddy* (Anon.); *Pavan in A minor* (Tomkins); *Fantasy, A Fancy in A re, Lord Salisbury's Pavan and Galliard* (Gibbons); *Woodcock Variations, Masque* (Farnaby).

All of the music on these discs dates from the first quarter of the 17th century, a short period when the best of early English music came into

being. The following composers are represented: William Byrd, Giles Farnaby, Peter Philips, John Bull and Thomas Tomkins. London has gone to the trouble to have this music recorded on the ancient instruments for which it was written, and thus these recordings are definitely in the proper tradition. As artists were secured who have devoted much time and study to the music of the period, we are assured of correct performances in spirit as well as technique.

We wish that we could give to these recordings the space that they deserve, but alas we could not. We hope that those interested will investigate these discs; and if they do, they will find the copious notes supplied by Robert Donington of supreme value.

Casadesus Plays Scarlatti and Rameau. Robert Casadesus (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4695) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Sonata in E, L. 23; Sonata in A, L. 395; Sonata in D, L. 411; Sonata in G, L. 387; Sonata in B minor, L. 449; Sonata in D, L. 463* (Scarlatti). *Gavotte; Le rappel des oiseaux; Les sauvages; Les niais de sologne* (Rameau).

Casadesus is noted for his sympathy for and superb performance of such music as will be found on the present LP disc. If you are interested in Scarlatti and Rameau, you will find this record very much to your liking, we are sure. Columbia has supplied excellent piano reproduction.

Villa-Lobos: Cirandas (Cycle of 16 Piano Pieces). Joseph Battista (piano). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3020) \$4.85

Villa-Lobos over the years has given much time to the study of the folk music of his native Brazil. He has traveled from one end of his country to the other, and it is said that he has collected and edited thousands of folk melodies. *Cirandas* is a suite of sixteen piano pieces, each based on a little folk song or dance; most of them are the sort of melodies that children sing and dance to when they are at play. This is not the type of music that will appeal to everyone, but those interested will find it highly attractive.

We are very fortunate to have the American pianist, Joseph Battista, for the recording artist in this instance. Battista has known the composer for many years, and in the summer of 1952 he visited him while on a concert tour of South America. They discussed *Cirandas*, and Battista began then to prepare himself to make a recording of the work. In January of the present year Villa-Lobos came to New York and further discussions took place with the composer giving the pianist many valued suggestions as to interpretation. The present recording was made within the following week.

VIOLONCELLO



Bach: Suite No. 3 in C for Violoncello. One side, and Bach: Suite No. 6 in D for Violoncello. Janos Starker (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-543) \$5.95.

Bartók: Rhapsody No. 1 for Violoncello and Piano. And Weiner: Lakodalmas (Hungarian Wedding Dance). One side, and Kodaly: Sonata for Violoncello and Piano, Op. 4. Janos Starker (violoncello) and Otto Herz (piano). 1-12" disc (*PROGRAM EXLP-702) \$5.95.

A musicological friend of ours has referred to Starker as the 3-dimensional 'cellist and, taking that statement in the most complimentary sense, it is indicative of the kind of playing that characterizes him. Aided, partially, by the extraordinary fidelity of these recordings, Starker's tone, for sheer uninhibited ruggedness, is today's peerless; but, at the same time, it is checked by a fine sense of formal cohesion, which, though it does not produce the niceties characteristic of, say, Fournier, does not need to, considering the bold healthiness of Starker's style.

His attack on the Bach Suites is vital and remarkably authentic, leaving Casal's precious noises to the musical sideshow of the earlier days of the phonograph. And his performance of the three Hungarian works, though not explicitly authentic, certainly does not lack the drive which that sort of music should have. The Bartók Rhapsody for 'Cello and Piano is actually Bartók's own transcription of his work for violin and piano, dedicated to Joseph Szigeti and performed by that artist (*C-ML-2213) with more understanding than Starker, though many should prefer the work played on the 'cello. The Kodaly Sonata should need no explanation or introduction to those 'cello devotees who have Starker's fabulous recording of Kodaly's Sonata for the unaccompanied instrument (*PE-SPL-510). This performance is a fitting companion to the first.

C.

ORGAN



Walther: Meinen Jesum lass' ich nicht. And Walther: Jesu meine Freude. One side, and Böhm: Ach wie nichtig, ach wie flüchtig. And Böhm: Auf meinen lieben Gott. And Böhm: Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend. Finn Videro, playing the organ at Jægersborg, Denmark. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-3066) \$5.95.

On this, his second LP disc for Haydn Society, the eminent Danish organist Finn Videro (pronounced (Vi'-dair-uh) has recorded *chorale variations* by two "contemporaries" of Johann Sebastian

Bach, Johann Gottfried Walther (1684-1748) and Georg Böhm (1661-1733).

Walther hailed from Erfurt where he received his early musical training from a cousin of Sebastian Bach's, Johann Bernhard Bach. He later became an organist at Weimar from 1707 until his death in 1748. His style is that of the South German school; but the influence of J. S. Bach, who also was in Weimar from 1708 until 1717, is quite evident, for the two were close friends. Much of Walther's work has been lost, but these *chorale variations*, published in 1713 (by his brother-in-law) are to be numbered among his finest and most typical compositions. They are, indeed, skillful and make rewarding listening.

Georg Böhm enjoyed, in his day, the highest of reputations, his keyboard music being singled out for special praise. It is characterized by strong use of ornaments and figuration suggesting the influence of French music. It is intensely interesting, what with its strange harmonies and strong emotional content.

Mr. Videro, known favorably in this country by his many recordings for HMV and the previous Haydn Society disc (devoted to J. S. Bach) is an acknowledged master in this field and his performances are impeccable. The organ used for this recording is a modern one, built in 1944, but is baroque in design and sound. It is equipped with tracker action, slider chests and mechanical registration. It has a particularly pure tone, never muddy nor overly massive. The specifications of the instrument as well as the registration used for the individual pieces are given in the jacket notes.

The recording is a superb technical job (as was its predecessor) and can be recommended highly from every angle.

W.

DICTION



Benet: John Brown's Body. Tyrone Power, Judith Anderson and Raymond Massey, with chorus directed by Richard White. 2-12" discs in album (*C-SL-181) \$12.11.

The reading of Stephen Vincent Benet's novel-length poem, *John Brown's Body*, by Tyrone Power, Judith Anderson and Raymond Massey has been a great success in the theatre since its first performance in New York last February. Such a performance makes ideal material for a recording—it needs no scenery, costumes nor properties and thus those who listen at home to their phonographs get practically everything that those who have paid for expensive seats in the theatre. Also they may have repeat performances at their convenience without additional cost. It would seem that the present recording is an excellent value for those who enjoy this sort of entertainment.

Shakespeare: Macbeth (complete). The Old Vic Company. 8-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-6010) \$9.75. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6010) \$11.44.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Macbeth	Alec Guinness
Lady Macbeth	Pamela Brown
Banquo	Andrew Cruickshank
Macduff	Robin Bailey
Lady Macduff	Rachel Gurney
Duncan	John Bushelle

This month a fine performance of *Macbeth* by the famous Old Vic Company of London is added to the ever-growing list of complete recorded versions of outstanding plays both old and new. The present cast is an excellent one, headed by Alec Guinness in the title role and Pamela Brown as Lady Macbeth. The recording, which was made in England, has been most successfully achieved and special credit must be given to the HMV engineers for the most realistic atmosphere which attends this outstanding performance. We do not doubt that various groups of players, both amateur and professional, who purpose to put on a production of *Macbeth*, will find this recording of inestimable value. Also, it will bring great joy to those of us who like to sit quietly in their easy chairs and hear the lines of the great bard spoken effectively and with just the right touch of the dramatic.

MISCELLANEOUS



Gypsy Music (Vol. II). Antal Kocze and his Band. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3004) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Roumanian Dance; Hungarian Song; Dances from Transylvania; Poszth Melody.

Gypsy Music (Vol. III). Antal Kosze and his Band. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3002) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Dances from Hungary; Gypsy Song; Czardas; Gypsy Song; Hungarian Dance.

Gypsy Fantasies. Michel and his Gypsy Ensemble. 1-12" disc (*WCFM-LP-16) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (4) Hungarian Fantasies; (4) Roumanian Fantasies.

This month we have two more LP discs containing Gypsy music played by the famous Antal Kocze and his Band of the Monseigneur Bar in Vienna. Added to these is the first recordings of Michel and his Gypsy Ensemble which has been famous in Washington, D. C., for many years. At the present time Michel is playing in his own restaurant on Vermont Avenue. We rather believe that those interested in Gypsy melodies will find that both Antal and Michel hold closely to the true tradition of this unique music.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$2.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Deca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoterie, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gorgorlan Institute of America, HS—Hadyn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric chord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Orseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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VOL. 21, NO. 9

NOVEMBER, 1953

By mail to any address
50c per year

IN 1951 COLUMBIA issued a Limited First Edition set of records of the 1950 Casals Festival, held at Prades, France; in 1952 Columbia issued a similar set of the 1951 Casals Festival; held that year at Perpignan. This month Columbia has issued the third in the series, this time of the 1952 Casals Festival held at Prades. As before, these are not recordings of actual performances, but studio recordings of the artists who performed at the Festival.

The present volume contains ten 12-inch LP's in a handsome box, and each copy of the Limited First Edition is individually numbered, making these sets collector's items to be treasured for more than just the music thereon. Packed with each numbered set is a post card which, when mailed to Columbia Records, Inc., entitles the sender to an LP disc of other Casal's recordings without charge; this "bonus" record is not available at any price, other than to owners of the numbered Limited Edition sets.

The publishers of this bulletin have secured a few of these Limited Edition sets (*C-SL-185), and if your local dealer cannot supply you, orders sent direct to the publishers will be promptly filled. The price: \$65, postpaid in U. S. A.

The contents of this set are as follows:

Brahms: Quintet No. 2 in G, Op. 111. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims, Milton Thomas (violas); Paul Tortelier (violoncello). One side, and **Schumann: Quintet in E-flat, Op. 44.** Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Thomas (viola); Paul Tortelier (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano).

Brahms: Quartet No. 3 in C minor, Op. 60. Joseph Szigeti (violin); Milton Katims (viola); Paul Tortelier (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano).

Brahms: Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims, Milton Thomas (violas); Pablo Casals, Madeline Foley (violoncellos).

Schubert: Quintet in C, Op. 163. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims (viola); Pablo Casals, Paul Tortelier (violoncellos).

Schubert: Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99. Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violoncello); Eugene Istomin (piano).

Schubert: Trio No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 100. Alexander Schneider (violin), Pablo Casals (violoncello); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano).

Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A, Op. 162 ("Duo"). Joseph Szigeti (violin) and Myra Hess (piano). One side, and **Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin, Op. 160**—Variations on "Trock'ne Blumen." John Wummer (flute) and Leopold Mannes (piano).

Schumann: (5) Stücke im Volkston, Op. 102. Pablo Casals (violoncello) and Leopold Mannes (piano). One side, and **Schumann: Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 63.** Alexander Schneider (violin); Pablo Casals (violoncello); Mieczyslaw Horszowski (piano).

Brahms: Trio No. 1 in B, Op. 8. Isaac Stern (violin); Pablo Casals (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano)

Brahms: Trio No. 2 in C, Op. 87. Joseph Szigeti (violin); Pablo Casals (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano).

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning November 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).

ORCHESTRA



Dvořák: *The Jacobin*, Op. 84—Suite. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Kurt Kretschmar. One side, and Dvořák: *Carnaval Overture*, Op. 92. Linz Bruckner Symphony Orchestra conducted by Georg Ludwig Jochum. And Smetana: *Libussa*—Overture. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7094) \$5.95.

Dvořák: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 95 ("From the New World"). Vienna State Philharmonia conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7590) \$5.95.

The *Urania* disc provides us with first recordings of two works by the great Czech composers, Dvořák and Smetana. Dvořák's *Jacobin Suite* is drawn from his opera, *The Jacobin*, a work with an undistinguished libretto, but a work containing much gay, humorous, melodious music. Judging from the excerpts woven together to form the suite, we would imagine most opera audiences enjoying this work quite as much as the Puccini favorites, even on first hearing (we refer to the music; the story and staging may be another matter entirely). The excellent Radio Berlin Orchestra plays this suite splendidly. Smetana's *Libussa Overture* here receives its first and what may well be its final recording. If it has any merit, other than being innocuous, it eluded us completely, despite the obviously good performance. The familiar *Carnaval Overture* stands out as a masterpiece by comparison with *Libussa*; Dvořák's work is played with spirit and all three works are well reproduced.

There have been many recordings lately of the "New World," including three last year and one this year, which were worth considerable discussion in these columns. Rather than compare the present disc with any others, including our former favorites, Ormandy and Kubelik, and the excellent Stokowski and Szell discs, we would rather discuss this man Horenstein. His recording of the Beethoven "Eroica" was much admired last month, and it is the same quality of dramatic interpretation which he brought to that work which makes the present "New World" recording such an invigorating listening experience. Horenstein does not approach this score from the traditional angle. He has studied it carefully, sought its content and meaning, and poured this feeling into a reading which is vital, dynamic and highly convincing. Comparing what Horenstein finds in the fourth movement (a glorious and thrilling piece of music at any time) with what others find in it is quite a revelation. We must admire this man tremendously and admit that his rich interpretive genius has provided us with musical moments both refreshing and exciting. The reproduction of this disc is also exceptional. The jacket claims the orchestra is the Vienna State Philharmonia, the record labels say it is the Vienna Symphony; whichever it may be, they play beautifully.

S.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*, Op. 67. One side, and Beethoven: *Egmont*, Op. 85—Overture. And Beethoven: *Coriolan Overture in C minor*, Op. 62. And Beethoven: *Leonore Overture No. 3 in C*, Op. 72a. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50017) \$5.95.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7 in A*, Op. 92. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9690) \$5.85.

Beethoven: *Symphony No. 7 in A*, Op. 92. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50022) \$5.95.

While each of these discs represent the umpteenth recording of these respective works, one cannot deny the value of fine performances of such masterworks; and a fine performance must be welcomed on its own merits, regardless of what preceded it. There are many folks who have thought that none of the existing LP's were just right for the *Fifth*. A goodly number of these folks may well find the Dorati disc to their taste, for he offers a well disciplined performance, staying safely on traditional ground. There are no eccentricities anywhere to mar the outlines of this great symphony; and Dorati manages to get a freshness and spirit into his reading, resulting in a completely satisfying performance. The three great overtures which occupy the reverse side of this disc are cast in the same mold. One needs little more, for Mercury has recorded these readings with their own unique reproduction, than which there is none finer today.

The pair of *Sevenths* in this brace of Beethoven discs are both good, even if they are poles apart in interpretation. Eugen Jochum and the Berlin Philharmonic, like Dorati, adhere strongly to the accepted ways. Here is a *Seventh* that is an honest statement of the music, and nothing more, well played and recorded. Paul Paray, while no Philistine in matters of musical tradition, is nonetheless an original thinker and can usually be counted on to provide something new in any score he tackles. He does not disappoint in the *Seventh*, coming through with a reading that bristles with animation and excitement. We would say he is successful until he gets to the end of the final movement, when we would have appreciated a bit more control instead of the bacchanalian revel he unleashes. For the fresh approach, he and Münch have much with which to entertain you. For the traditional reading, Jochum and several others have LP's to take care of the trade who want that style; and for the readings of a traditional nature but with a large dose of kinetic energy, Toscanini and Bruno Walter are recommended. We have always preferred Toscanini in this work, and still do. The *Seventh* is a gay and rhythmic work, and you have many different performances of real merit from which to choose. For an exciting reading and stunning reproduction, listen to this new Paray disc.

S.

Handel: (12) Concerti Grossi, Op. 6. Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 4-12" discs in album (*D-DX-126) \$23.40.

Here we have the first complete recording of the twelve concerti grossi of Handel's Opus 6 since the Busch Chamber Players Columbia recording that appeared five or six years ago. London has recorded the first ten of them by the Boyd Neel Orchestra but those music lovers who have been collecting these have been awaiting the Nos. 11 and 12 for a long time.

Now the question is what should one do who does not have any recordings of these attractive little Handel pieces. The Busch Players did a wonderful job, and despite the age of the recordings their versions should be given consideration. The London recordings by Boyd Neel have received great praise by the critics but most collectors are anxious for a complete set and it is convenient to have them housed in one album. The present set by the Bamberg Symphony has the benefit of modern reproduction; and the conductor, Fritz Lehmann, is well and favorably known throughout Europe as an ideal interpreter of Bach and Handel. Also the present Decca album contains excellent notes in which each of the twelve concerti are carefully analyzed.

We have the earlier Busch set in our private library, and we are not going to make any change. However, if we did not have it, we would certainly give the present Decca album very careful consideration.

Honegger: Symphonie Liturgique. Dresden Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Walter Stoschek. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7090) \$5.95.

The accompanying program notes state: "A modern work cast in a classical mold, the *Symphony No. 3, Symphonie Liturgique*, was completed in 1946 and performed in Zurich for the first time on August 17 of the same year by Charles Münch, to whom the score was dedicated. Honegger describes his work as a symphonic equivalent of three episodes in the Requiem Mass: *Dies Irae*, *De Profundis Clamavi*, and *Dono Nobis Pacem*." Our first impression, on hearing this work, is that it is a pity it was not recorded by Charles Münch and the Boston Symphony, for at least we would have had a more polished and accurate statement of the score from which to form an opinion. The present recording suffers from an inadequate performance, as well as none too excellent reproduction. The Dresden Philharmonic is a more accomplished group than their playing of this work would indicate. Walter Stoschek is a new name among conductors to us. He seems to have a fair knowledge of and feeling for the score.

The music is pretty much composed of modern idioms and styles of a rather accepted and common variety. While this work may be the symphonic equivalent of three episodes in the Requiem Mass, do not think that it would do as a substitute for a

standard choral rendition during an actual Mass. Many would be the souls present who would scurry out in horror, thinking evil forces had invaded the sanctuary. If you can look at a modern painting, which to most folks would depict some abstract geometric design whether it were hanging right side up or not, and if you could feel the emotion of a mother being parted from her only child—then you may be able to translate some of these sounds into the realm of a Requiem Mass. We found it rather difficult, and beyond that, we could not translate the music into anything resembling a pleasant or otherwise stimulating musical experience. S.

Mahler: Symphony No. 1 in D ("Titan"). The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" (*CL-P-8224) \$5.70.

Gustav Mahler's first symphony, sub-titled "The Titan" (for reasons that are not apparent to this writer) receives its third major LP recording with this release.

The performance is a disappointing one. When compared with Dimitri Mitropoulos' vigorous exposition of the score with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (*C-ML-4251) this presentation seems anemic and emerges as a series of disjointed episodes that certainly does not do justice to Mahler.

The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra plays with its accustomed accuracy; the brass section is particularly fine, but there is a general feeling of boredom, a lack of sympathy that deprives the score (never really great music) of any chance to be convincing.

Capitol has recorded well, although at a somewhat lower volume level than one is accustomed to, with the result that a certain "smallness" of sound is added to the deficiencies of both score and interpretation.

Prospective purchasers of the record are advised then, to hear it first, for it cannot be judged unheard on the basis of previous recordings by Capitol and Steinberg; it just isn't in the same class as the performances of the Mendelssohn "Scotch" Symphony and the Beethoven "Pastoral". W.

Liszt: A Symphony to Dante's "Divine Comedy" (1856). Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9670) \$5.85.

The composer's original intention was to write this symphony in three movements corresponding to the three portions of Dante's poem, Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise, the first two movements purely instrumental, the last with chorus. But Richard Wagner persuaded him to alter his plan, saying that no human being could express in music the joys of Paradise. The "Dante Symphony" now concludes with a Magnificat for women's voices in place of a third movement. As the work now stands, the two movements are titled Inferno and Purgatory; it takes about three-quarters of an hour playing time.

In this first LP recording one could offer little but

praise for the fine performance which Alfred Wallenstein and the Los Angeles Philharmonic have achieved. This well disciplined orchestra, assisted by an excellent female chorus, has given obvious care and preparation to the music, and it is played with admirable finish and enthusiasm. The music itself is generally interesting; it becomes a bit thin and lacking in interest in the sustained softer passages, but they do not dominate the work. There is much that is typical of Liszt's tone poems and even some familiar patterns from *Les Préludes* creep in at the beginning of the work. We think it is a piece worthy of hearing now and then, and one that will appeal to many folks. The fine performance offered here adds much to its appeal and Decca has supplied superb reproduction. We were greatly impressed by a hearing of this disc and recommend it heartily to those who are seeking something different but cast in familiar molds. S.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 2 in D minor, Op. 70.

Hamburg Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-778) \$5.95.

As most of us have learned by now, it is unreliable to associate the number of a symphony with the chronological order in which it was composed. You would imagine, logically, that the second symphony which a man wrote would be called his second symphony when, as, and if it were published, at any time during or after his life. In our narrow mind, a second symphony is a second symphony. But publishers have different ideas. The first symphony they publish is called the first symphony even if it happens to be the sixth that the man wrote. At least that is the way it used to be. Thus we have the inference that the present work is an early effort of the Czech master, yet it is his sixth or seventh in order of composition. We say sixth or seventh, because there is considerable confusion over the numbering. The annotator for London says it is seventh, the annotator for the Victor HMV disc of this work says it is the sixth, and that is about the general level of agreement wherever you look. Whatever the number, let it be known that this is not only a fully mature work, but one to which Dvořák attached great importance, and one with which he took great pains in composition. The influence of Brahms was strong upon him at this time, and the work is the best organized and strongest writing to come from Dvořák's pen. Regardless of any Germanic influence, this symphony remains strongly individual and full of Bohemian flavor.

Of the several recordings now available of this work, Kubelik and the Philharmonia Orchestra (*V-LHMV-1029) and the present disc offer little from which to choose. Kubelik is at his best in this type of music, and his performance is a fine one. Schmidt-Isserstedt supplies a goodly portion of the inherent Bohemian flavor of this work, and also manages to play it a bit more carefully. London's

reproduction must be admitted to be superior; it is, in fact, a striking example of their best orchestral reproduction, and one which will please hi-fi fans no end, for well balanced and faithful orchestral timbre. We would recommend the new London disc of Dvořák's Second Symphony as a good performance, fine recording, and as wonderful music. S.

Scriabin: Le Poème d'Extase, Op. 54. One side, and **Scriabin: Prometheus, Op. 60.** Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4731) \$5.45.

Poem of Ecstasy was recently released on a disc coupling it with Loeffler's *A Pagan Poem* (*CL-P-8188), which we thought an interesting coupling as well as a pair of good performances. *Poem of Ecstasy* is now coupled with the same composer's *Poem of Fire* (*Prometheus*). Both these works were part of a projected cycle, beginning with *The Divine Poem*, which aimed at combining music, color, word, miming, and odor. Its theme was to be the rebirth of man. The cycle was to conclude with a tone-poem entitled *Mysterium*, but was never completed. The two works on the present disc are original and ambitious works from Scriabin's later period. They stand well as music alone, without benefit of the other props and trappings of color, miming, and the like.

The Poem of Ecstasy is divided into three sections described as (1) the composer's soul in the orgy of love, (2) the realization of a fantastical dream, (3) the glory of his own art. *The Poem of Fire* depicts mankind as existing in barbarism until the coming of Prometheus whose gift of fire awakened good men to creative activity and lesser men to more evil purpose. The music describes the struggle between these two elements with the good emerging triumphant. The hero of the work is, of course, Prometheus, the Titan who stole fire from heaven and gave it to mortals. The story is not a bad idea, and Scriabin's music is a provocative piece of writing.

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic play the music with magnificent breadth and scope; there is a quality of brilliance and rightness about these performances which make them convincing and which also clarify the music and present it in a way that promotes your enjoyment of it. Columbia has supplied reproduction of exceptional range and power, which makes this an outstanding disc. S.

Copland: Symphony No. 3. Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Antal Dorati. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50018) \$5.95.

Antal Dorati and the Minneapolis Symphony and Mercury have made a most distinguished contribution to the recorded music of American composers with this release. Copland's *Symphony No. 3* was commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation and is considered one of the finest works to emerge from

a long line of scores which this notable Foundation has commissioned. Copland worked on the score for two years, beginning it just after completion of *Appalachian Spring*. The symphony is pure and abstract music with no program intended or implied. The second and fourth movements partake a bit of the song and dance idiom familiar to us in the composer's stage and film works. Although the unrelenting rhythmic intensity (even in the slow episodes), the harmonic flavor and some of the themes are unmistakably suggestive of American hymn and folksong, Copland stated in forthright fashion that, "It contains no folk or popular material . . . Any reference to jazz or folk material in this work is purely unconscious."

Mercury's program notes are full and informative, and include a running commentary on the symphony contributed by the composer. There is much of interest in the work, and it is all from a real musical standpoint, there being no story or program. We found this music attractive because it is compelling and sincere. It could hardly be called pretty or beautiful in the romantic sense; rather it is engaging because of the composer's skill and because of its American idiom. If you have liked previous Copland scores, this one will prove just as enjoyable, although it is on a higher plane than his more popular works. Dorati makes one of his most commendable contributions to Mercury's fine Olympian Series with this reading of the Copland *Third Symphony*. Nothing but praise could be offered for such a performance, in which the Minneapolis Orchestra sounds first rate every minute. The reproduction is, as always in this series, just superb.

S.

Ravel: Valses nobles et sentimentales. One side, and **Ravel: Le Tombeau de Couperin.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-795) \$5.95.

Ravel Selections. L'Orchestre Radio-Symphonique de Paris conducted by René Leibowitz. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8150) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Bolero; La Valse; Rapsodie Espagnole; Alborada del Gracioso; Pavane pour une infante défunte.*

No performance of music could have more refinement and subtlety than when Ansermet performs music of Ravel; and these qualities are produced honestly and without benefit of any superficial tricks or conductorial mannerisms. There is a purity and logic to this pair of recordings that stamp it unmistakably as the work of Ansermet, a conductor for whom most of us have the greatest admiration. There are other recordings of each of these works, but no one exceeds Ansermet for sheer beauty in his reading of the music. *Valses nobles et sentimentales* emerges in the most ingratiating way we have ever heard, and we imagine Ravel himself would give this reading warm approval. Fine London reproduction makes this disc an outstanding one in every respect, notably

in the matter of fidelity in recording soft effects—for once nothing smashing nor earth shaking—just beautiful orchestral tone at a moderate level.

Vox's disc of Ravel music offers one hour of music comprising the composer's most popular orchestral works. They label it as "Ultra High Fidelity," and it is that indeed, a fine example of recording orchestral fortissimos at a high volume level with extreme clarity. René Leibowitz proves himself a masterly exponent of the flashy and brilliant side of Ravel's scores, with performances of *Bolero* and *La Valse* which are exceptionally fine. His tempo for *Bolero* is the correct one—slow and steady, and he does not race through *La Valse*. The Charles Münch reading of *Bolero* has always been the best in our opinion; Leibowitz comes mighty close to Münch, and enjoys even more revealing reproduction. Both Münch and Ansermet have recorded these various Ravel scores, and the choice among the three is no easy matter. One can get the best grouping on the Vox, what with five selections on the one disc, and be assured of worthy performances. We therefore recommend this disc, unless you wish specific works by either Ansermet or Münch.

S.

Honegger: Symphony No. 5. One side, and **Roussel: Bacchus et Ariane** (Ballet Suite No. 2). And **Ravel: Pavane pour une Infante défunte.** Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Münch. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1741) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1741) \$5.72.

Schönberg: Verklärte Nacht. One side, and **Vaughan Williams: Fantasia on a Theme by Tallis.** Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1739) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1739) \$5.72.

The two handsome records (and the adjective is used advisedly) listed in the above heading are further identified on their respective jackets as being "From the Connoisseur Catalog," a harmless bit of snobbery that has more than usual aptness. Two of the finest conductors, both virtuosos in the fullest sense of the word, working out on music that might almost have been written with them in mind, deserve a little extra attention.

First let us consider Charles Münch in the three modern French works. The Honegger *Symphony* was written in 1949 for the Koussevitzky Music Foundation and has been introduced in both Europe and America by Mr. Münch and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The score is a colorful one, and while the idiom is not one the writer finds sympathetic, nonetheless there is more justification for the dissonance here than one usually finds in contemporary music. The Roussel and Ravel sound almost classic by comparison; the former bearing a startling resemblance, in certain passages, to Dukas' *L'Apprenti sorcier*.

Stokowski and his orchestra have a field day on the other disc. The *Fantasia* receives particularly lush treatment and comes through very well, so

well in fact that it may be considered the best of the three recorded versions thus far. Stokowski infuses an almost erotic atmosphere into the score which one is sure neither Tallis nor Vaughan Williams intended; but the effect, for one listener, was little short of superb. The *Verklärte Nacht* is played here in the 1943 version for full string orchestra (it was originally written in 1899 as a string sextet). The work, as can be readily imagined, is played to the hilt.

The recording is about the best to be heard on records, the Boston Orchestra one being more spectacular because of the full scoring; but the string tone evoked by Stokowski is still something to conjecture with, and RCA's engineers do just that. While not for everyone, (this reviewer likes only the Vaughan Williams unreservedly) these discs should be investigated by all with a flair for the unusual.

W.

Saint-Saëns: Suite Algérienne, Op. 60. L'Orchestre

National de la Radiodiffusion Française conducted by Louis Fourestier. One side, and **Massenet: Les Erinnyses.** L'Orchestre de l'Opéra Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8100) \$5.95.

Fauré: Pelléas et Mélisande, Op. 80. One side, and

Dukas: La Péri—Poème dansé. L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7097) \$5.95

Chabrier: Suite Pastorale. One side, and **Bizet:**

Petite Suite, Op. 22 ("Jeux d'Enfants"). And **Bizet: L'Arlésienne Suite No. 2**—Farandole. And **Bizet: La Jolie Fille de Perth**—Danse bohémienne. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3000) \$4.85.

Three discs, six sides, and six French composers represented, and in every case the work is a lesser known but worthy one. To describe all this music would take several columns; if you care to find out about it, the program notes for all three discs are lengthy and informative, and you will find them interesting. Practically all of this music is on discs for the first time, and all of it is presented here in its best recorded performance if it has ever before been committed to discs. Each of these records is a good performance and a good recording. The disc of outstanding reproduction among them is the Vox, both sides of which are super hi-fi with a pleasant tone, even in the strings. Massenet's *Les Erinnyses* is incidental music to the "tragédie antique" by Leconte de Lisle, and contains what became the composer's most popular single piece, *Elégie*. Saint-Saëns' *Suite Algérienne* is a descriptive piece on the same order as Ibert's *Escapes*, and is thoroughly interesting music which would go well in the concert hall once in a while. It receives a brilliant reading by Fourestier, who is notably effective in the *Marche Militaire Française*, making great music out of this often maligned

piece.

Urania's record has really fine reproduction too, for in the Fauré *Pelléas et Mélisande* orchestral suite we have some wonderful recording of soft orchestral effects, solo instruments, and lovely string tone. George Sebastian directs this music with a fine regard for shading and nuance. He is just as successful in Dukas' *La Péri* with orchestral tutti and fortissimo effects. Of all the music on these six sides, Fauré's is probably the best in a classical sense, even if it is not as entertaining as some of the other bonbons.

The MGM disc is another good value, being loaded with light music that is nevertheless good music. Edward Cole's lengthy program notes will give the reader plenty of food for thought regarding what we loosely call "light" music. And his championing of Bizet's *Children's Games* reveals the authentic realness of this music portraying childhood scenes. He also puts up quite a case for the art of Chabrier. Warwick Braithwaite performs this music with polish and affection, and the recording is one of the best yet from MGM. We have completely enjoyed each disc in this lot and recommend them heartily to anyone interested.

S.

Gould: Tap Dance Concerto. Rochester "Pops"

Orchestra conducted by Morton Gould, with Danny Daniels, dance soloist. One side, and **Gould: Family Album** (Suite for Orchestra). Rochester "Pops" Orchestra conducted by Morton Gould. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2215) \$4.

Morton Gould is quite a fellow; one does not know what to expect next from this versatile and thoroughly original musician. Here we have a concerto in classical form for tap dancer and orchestra, complete with quite a long cadenza. We presume that the cadenza is Danny Daniels'; we haven't heard that Mr. Gould is proficient enough in tap dancing to write in that medium. Mr. Gould states that individual soloists may elaborate on his score to suit themselves as long as they "keep the basic rhythmic designs so that the work has an organized and formal consistency." Tap dancers please take note—if you wish to try a few of your steps with this record please don't mess up the "basic rhythmic designs."

The *Family Album* is a nostalgic highly descriptive work in five sections with the following titles: Outing in the Park; Porch Swing on a Summer Evening; Nickelodeon; Old Romance; Horseless Carriage Galop. We found it mighty clever and highly amusing—perhaps you will enjoy it too.

Rodgers—arr. Bennett: Victory at Sea (Suite from the NBC Television Production). Members of the NBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Robert Russell Bennett. 4-7" discs in box (ØV-WDM-1779) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1779) \$5.72.

Richard Rodgers of *Oklahoma*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I* fame wrote the background music for the 26 half-hour television programs which were

so highly successful under the title *Victory at Sea*. Robert Russell Bennett did the fascinating orchestrations. From these thirteen hours of music Mr. Bennett arranged the present Suite. It is in nine stirring movements: The Song of the High Seas; The Pacific Boils Over; Guadalcanal; D-Day; Hard Work and Horseplay; Theme of the Fast Carriers; Beneath the Southern Cross; Mare Nostrum; Victory at Sea. The titles of these movements give a good idea of what is to be expected and Messrs. Rodgers and Bennett never disappoint their listeners. Big moments are painted with great sweeps of a broad brush, while intimate little scenes are depicted with rare subtlety. A half-hour of this may be too much for some listeners; and there will be those to whom this music will not appeal at all, but be that as it may, one cannot help feeling that a great piece of descriptive music has been written in the American idiom. R.

Franck: Symphony in D minor. St. Louis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Golschmann. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8221) \$5.70.

Of the ten or twelve versions of this symphony that are already available on LP records this one is for those who like it well sugared. For us either Monteux's recording for RCA Victor (*V-LM-1065) or Ormandy's for Columbia (*C-ML-4024) is plenty sweet enough.

Khachaturian: Gayne (Ballet Suite No. 1). One side, and **Khachaturian: Masquerade** (Ballet Suite). Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fabien Sevitzky. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8223) \$5.70.

Sevitzky turns in two very nice performances of these popular ballet suites. We have not heard any recordings of the Indianapolis Symphony for some time—it sounds like a pretty fine organization on this LP disc.

Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet (Ouverture-Fantasia). Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Fritz Lehmann. One side, and **Liszt: Hungaria** (Symphonic Poem No. 9). Bamberg Symphony Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7544) \$3.85.

We don't know that this LP disc is such a good bargain even at its modest price. The surfaces of the copy we heard were not as quiet as we would have liked them to be. We think the more expensive recordings of these works are well worth the added cost.

Tchaikovsky: Nutcracker Suite, Op. 71a. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: The Sleeping Beauty Ballet, Op. 66** (excerpts). Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4729) \$5.45.

Here is an LP record with a winner on each side. Ormandy is good at such music as these ever-popular Tchaikovsky selections; and with the Phila-

delphians in top form we have a disc that should make the best sellers list in a jiffy and stay there for a while.

Brahms: Serenade in D, Op. 11. Little Orchestra Society conducted by Thomas Scherman. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9651) \$5.85.

There are other LP recordings of this famous Brahms Serenade, but we rather think that most music lovers will prefer the present version by the Little Orchestra Society under the brilliant direction of Thomas Scherman. If you are not familiar with this charming selection in six delightful little movements, here is an opportunity to make its acquaintance under most favorable circumstances.

Old English and French Music. Westminster Light Orchestra conducted by Leslie Bridgewater. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-4007) \$4.95.

CONTENTS: (3) French Dances (Anon.); *Plaisir d'Amour* (Martini—arr. Saunders); *Tambourin* (Leclair); *Le Malade Imaginaire*—excerpts (Couperin—arr. Bridgewater); *Overture* (Boyce); *Allemande, Minuet and Bourée* (Jones); *Courtly Masqueing Airs* (Lawes); *Gigue* (Purcell).

Music Under the Stars. Popular Orchestral Favorites played by prominent European orchestras. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7096) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *España* (Chabrier); (2) *Norwegian Dances* (Grieg); *Die Fledermaus*—Overture (Strauss); *L'Oiseau de Feu*—Infernal Dance (Stravinsky); *Danse Macabre*, Op. 40 (Saint-Saëns); *The Red Poppy*—Waltz (Glière); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 1* (Liszt); *The Comedians*, Op. 26—Gallop (Kabalevsky).

These two LP discs contain music that is easy to listen to—the first presents music of another age delightfully played under the brilliant direction of Leslie Bridgewater and the second offers favorite orchestral selections that are often heard on present-day programs. Both records were made to be enjoyed, and as such we recommend them.

Haydn: Divertimento in F ("Feldparthie"). One side, and **Haydn: March for the Prince of Wales.** And **Haydn: London Trio No. 4 in C.** And **Haydn: Grenadier March.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4076) \$2.50.

Handel: Overture Suite. One side, and **Handel: Aria No. 1 for Two Horns.** And **Handel: Aria No. 2 for Two Horns.** And **Handel: Gavotte.** And **Handel: March.** London Baroque Ensemble conducted by Karl Haas. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4070) \$2.50.

Here are two more LP discs by Karl Haas' famous London Baroque Ensemble. True, they will have a limited appeal; but those who appreciate music of this character and have been collecting recordings by this celebrated chamber group will be glad to know that they are available.

Copland: Appalachian Spring. One side, and **Piston: The Incredible Flutist.** Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7092) \$5.95.

It seems that we have to go to Europe for recordings of our American composers. In the present case we go to Berlin for recordings of two typically American works by two of our outstanding composers, Aaron Copland and Walter Piston. Mr. Copland's ballet *Appalachian Spring* was written for Martha Graham and was first produced in 1944. It won the Pulitzer Prize in 1945 and was given the New York Critics Circle award for the outstanding theatrical work of the 1944-45 season. From the ballet Copland arranged the symphonic suite here recorded. This suite was given its first performance by the New York Philharmonic-Symphony on 4 October 1945. Since that time it has been successfully performed by many leading symphony orchestras throughout the country. . . . Piston's *The Incredible Flutist* dates from 1938 and was given its first performance in the spring of that year by Hans Wiener and His Dancers and the Boston "Pops" under the direction of Arthur Fiedler. . . . Both of these works are a joy to listen to and rate with the most popular modern American compositions in the ballet field.

CONCERTO



Weber: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 11. One side, and **Weber: Concerto No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 32.** Friedrich Wührer (piano) with the Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8140) \$5.95.

Since Weber the instrumental composer is known almost exclusively for the *Konzertstücke* and, perhaps, the Clarinet Concerto, it was with a feeling of condescension (born of ignorance, it soon developed) that this reviewer started to play the two youthful concerti recorded here. So far, he has played them three times in as many days, each time with increasing enjoyment.

The first of the two, dating from 1810, is obviously the work of a young man (Weber was twenty-four) but knowing that he was later to compose *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*, the listener can hear orchestral effects that foreshadow those in the great romantic operas. The opening march-like movement is melodious and lyrical, the slow movement is little more than an *intermezzo*, being only forty-eight bars in length, then a brisk rondo brings the joyous work to an eminently satisfactory conclusion.

The second concerto, written two years later, shows considerable structural growth and is, perhaps, more sensuous than its predecessor. The slow movement here is a charmingly worked out *adagio*. The writing for piano is more complex and calls for greater virtuosity, especially in the last movement.

The annotator, on the jacket of this disc, has

happily phrased the effect the two concerti achieve ". . . (they) have undeniable charm which can be explained neither by theory nor by analysis; it is rather the carefree exuberance of a genius in his first joyous expression."

Frederich Wührer is an ideal interpreter for this romantic music, and Hans Swarowsky and the Pro Musica Orchestra supply tasteful and appropriate accompaniments. The recording is fine, and the reader is urged to investigate this record. It is one of the year's most pleasant surprises. W.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 129. One side, and **Bruch: Kol Nidrei, Op. 47.** And **J. C. Bach: Concerto in C minor.**

Joseph Schuster (violoncello) with the Los Angeles Orchestral Society conducted by Franz Waxman. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8232) \$5.70.

This LP disc will probably act as an introduction to many music lovers of the distinguished violoncellist, Joseph Schuster. Mr. Schuster was born in Constantinople in 1905. He studied at St. Petersburg and Berlin and was for five years the first 'cellist of the Berlin Philharmonic. He came to America in 1934 and shortly thereafter became first 'cellist of the Philharmonic-Symphony of New York. After eight years in that position, he began concertizing in recitals and as soloist with important symphony orchestras. Successful tours of South America, Europe, the Orient and the United States have been made within recent years.

In the present recording he is teamed with the very fine Los Angeles Orchestral Society, an organization of outstanding players, under the direction of Franz Waxman. This Society was founded in 1947 for the purpose of bringing a Festival of Music each year to Southern California. These Festivals have met with great success and have been the means of introducing much new music and some very fine young artists to the music lovers of our country.

Schumann: Concerto in A minor, Op. 54. Wilhelm Kempff (piano) with the London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-781) \$5.95.

When the Noväes-Klemperer recording of this work was released (*VX-PL-7110) we thought it the best performance we had ever heard, and we have stuck to that opinion as each subsequent release was reviewed. We are still sticking to that opinion. The vitality and enthusiasm which Mme. Noväes and her orchestral collaborator bring to this music is in no wise matched by Kempff and Krips. Krips never is a ball of fire, taking things on the pale, pastel, dainty side whenever possible, and Kempff seems to lack the romantic sweep and bravura which this music can stand so nicely. Maybe Kempff was tired the day he made this disc, for he is not lacking in energy in the admirable series of Beethoven Sonatas which he recorded. Whatever the reason, the audible facts remain that these two gentlemen do not offer nearly

as vital a performance as Noväes and Klemperer. In matters of reproduction, you may prefer London, for Vox's tonal quality is dangerously brilliant, although it can be tone-controlled to a pleasant point. London's reproduction, in this case, is a shade too dark for our taste.

Schumann's *Piano Concerto* is not only one of his finest works, but it is one of the great piano concertos in all the literature of this form, as well as one of the great works of the romantic period. It abounds in the most lovable of melodies; and its construction is satisfying in its logic, much as a Beethoven symphony. That such a masterpiece should receive numerous good recordings is to be expected, and Serkin, Rubinstein, and Lipatti, among others have LP's worth considering if you are particularly fond of these artists. Of the later recordings we enthusiastically endorse Noväes, and think most folks will enjoy her rendition immensely.

S.

Concertos for You. Liberace (piano) with Paul Weston and his Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4764) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Warsaw Concerto (Addinsell); Chopin's *Fantasia* (arr. Robinson); *Dream of Olwen* (Williams); *Stella by Starlight* (Young); Grieg's *Piano Concerto* (excerpts from 1st movement—arr. Robinson); *Cornish Rhapsody* (Bath); *Laura* (Raksin); *Spellbound Concerto* (Rozsa); Rachmaninoff's *Fantasia* (arr. Robinson).

The great Liberace, "The Chopin of TV," has turned to the music of certain films and to Chopin, Grieg and Rachmaninoff for pieces that were in concerto form, or could be nicely arranged for piano and orchestra, and made up the tuneful program that will be found on this LP disc. Serious music lovers may tear their hair at this one; but those who don't know and don't care where a tune comes from as long as it is pleasing to listen to will think this "classical" music is the nuts.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Mozart: (6) Quartets Dedicated to Haydn. Budapest String Quartet. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-187) \$17.35.

CONTENTS: *Quartets in G*, K. 387; in *D minor*, K. 421; in *E-flat*, K. 428; in *B-flat*, K. 458 ("The Hunt"); in *A*, K. 464; in *C*, K. 465 ("Dissonant").

Last year (TNR November 1952) Columbia issued a complete recording of the sixteen Beethoven String Quartets by the Budapest players. The recording was made in the Coolidge Auditorium of the Library of Congress and the famous Stradivari instruments of the Gertrude Clarke Whitall Foundation were used. This recording, which was released in three volumes, was a great success and marked an important milestone in the progress of the art. This year, we have recordings of the six string quartets which Mozart dedicated to Haydn recorded by the same

artists in the same auditorium; the same famous instruments were used. It is our guess that these later recordings will meet with just as much favor as did the earlier ones.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69. (TNR Feb. '49). And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2.** And **Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1.** (TNR July '50). Artur Schnabel (piano) and Pierre Fournier (violoncello). 4-7" discs in box (\$V-WCT-1124) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1124) \$5.72.

Both the *Sonata No. 3 in A, Op. 69* and the *Sonata No. 4 in C, Op. 102, No. 1* have been previously issued in America and reviewed in **THE NEW RECORDS** in the issues indicated in the heading. However, the *Sonata No. 5 in D, Op. 102, No. 2*, while previously recorded, was issued only in Europe and never found its way to our shores. We can only suggest that it would be difficult to obtain a better recorded performance than Messrs. Schnabel and Fournier turn in here, and the reproduction is quite satisfactory, even by today's undeniably high standards.

Grieg: Sonata No. 3 in C minor, Op. 43. One side, and **Schubert: Sonata No. 5 in A, Op. 162 ("Duo").** Fritz Kreisler (violin) and Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano). 4-7" discs in box (\$V-WCT-1128) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1128) \$5.72.

RCA Victor has re-issued these beautiful renditions by Kreisler and Rachmaninoff, and collectors may be thankful that these long lost versions are once again available. Considering that both Sonatas were recorded before **THE NEW RECORDS** came into existence, the reproduction is amazingly good; however those interested in this recording will not hold the reproduction against it, in any case.

Prokofiev: Sonata in F minor, Op. 80. One side, and **Prokofiev: Sonata in D, Op. 94.** Isaac Stern (violin) and Alexander Zakin (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4734) \$5.45.

If you are interested in these two outstanding chamber works by the late Russian composer, Serge Prokofiev, it will be hard to imagine better performances than those presently supplied by Isaac Stern and Alexander Zakin. We presume that they will take the place of the earlier versions by Szigeti that are listed in the Columbia catalog.

CHORAL



Isaac: Missa Carminum. (Sung in Latin). Vienna Akademie Kammerchor conducted by Ferdinand Grossmann. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5215) \$5.95.

Among the great figures of the Renaissance, that of Heinrich Isaac or Arrigo Tedesco (Harry the German) has been overlooked with a beautiful unanimity. The author of many secular and religious works, Isaac lived a relatively long (circa 1450-1517) life, traveled considerably and, while his music was popular in his day, it soon slipped into the category

of the museum piece. He is remembered best, perhaps, for his harmonization (it is not thought he wrote the tune) of the famous folk song *Innsbruck, ich muss du lassen* which, incidentally, is incorporated into the "Christe elision" of the *Missa Carminum*.

No one knows for sure when the *Missa Carminum* was written. First knowledge of it came some twenty-four years after Isaac's death when the work was published. A recent edition, dating from 1930 is, in all probability, the version used in this recording. The mass is divided into the usual five sections, *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. Isaac was not above using popular songs in his masses, for in addition to the instance noted above, there is conclusive evidence of secular tunes in the *Gloria* section. It was practices such as these that led to the reforms instituted by Pope Gregory XIII.

The performance recorded here struck this reviewer as a bit heavy for Renaissance music. Either the chorus is too large or the recording is too "big" for there is a massiveness about it that would be much more appropriate to the baroque style. It is difficult to judge a work such as this via the phonograph and without a score, and Westminster does not help matters any by furnishing nothing but the most general notes with no indication of the forces employed or any sort of "touch-stone" as it were, for the relatively uninitiated to use as a guide. Definitely a record for the scholar and lover of old music.

W.

Bach: St. Matthew Passion (complete). (Sung in German). Magda Laszlo (soprano); Hildegard Roessel-Majdan (contralto); Petre Munteanu (tenor); Richard Standen (bass); Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 4-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-401) \$24.45.

Bach: St. Matthew Passion (abridged). (Sung in German). Jo Vincent (soprano); Ilona Durigo (alto); Luis van Tulder (tenor); Herman Schey (bass); Amsterdam Toonkunstchoir and "Zanglust" Boys' Choir and Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Willem Mengelberg. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-179) \$17.35.

There are as many ways of performing Bach's music, it would seem, as there are performing artists. These two recordings of the monumental *Saint Matthew Passion* illustrate the foregoing platitude very nicely. Hermann Scherchen, a somewhat controversial figure among phonophiles (this reviewer, it must be admitted, is more pro than con) takes a dramatic approach, while the late Willem Mengelberg adopts the more conventional, the nineteenth century position of playing it, as though Bach had lived at the dawn of the romantic era.

Now to state bluntly which is correct would be manifestly impossible. Historically, however, there is a case to be made for the dramatic approach. Christian Adler, writing in 1732, some three years

after the *première* of the *Saint Matthew Passion* stated "When this theatrical music began, all the people were thrown into the greatest bewilderment, looked at each other and said 'What will come of this?' An old widow of the nobility said: 'God save us, my children! It is just as if one were at an opera-comedy!'" So much, then, for performances in Bach's time. The story of the *Saint Matthew Passion* is certainly one of the most dramatic and moving of all time; and to play it in a quiet, almost contemplative manner can scarcely be condoned.

This writer, then, decidedly prefers the Westminster performance to that on Columbia from an interpretive aspect. There is also another item—two in fact—to be considered. First, the Columbia set is abridged, particularly as regards the second section, while the Westminster seems (a score was not available) complete. Second, the Columbia discs were made at an actual performance that took place about fourteen years ago—the Westminster is new and, of course, is a performance for records.

Naturally there will be those who admire Mengelberg and as a memento of his work the set has its obvious merits. It is difficult to appraise the work of the soloists in this set because of the technical deficiencies of the recording. Scherchen's vocalists and chorus, however, are very good. There is a group of excellent instrumental soloists and the unnamed chorus and orchestra are always more than adequate.

Complete texts and, in the case of the Westminster recording intelligent notes, are furnished. W.

Vaughan Williams: Five Tudor Portraits. Nell Rankin (mezzo-soprano); Robert B. Anderson (bass-baritone); the Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh directed by Russell Wichman; and the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8218) \$5.70.

This is a first recording of a presumably new work by Ralph Vaughan Williams. The *Five Tudor Portraits* is described as a "choral suite," and the recording was made at an actual performance during the First Pittsburgh International Contemporary Music Festival. It is a musical setting of five poems by John Skelton (1460-1529) one time English Poet Laureate.

Musically the work is characteristic of Vaughan Williams' choral writing, another way of saying it is a craftsmanlike job, melodious and reminiscent of English folk song. The performance, insofar as one can judge, is a good one. The chorus sings with spirit and expression. Obviously well trained and rehearsed, they give an excellent account of themselves. The soloists are good and enter into the spirit of the work. Steinberg and the orchestra second everyone's efforts admirably.

What is confusing, however, is the complete absence of any sort of analytical notes. Here is a



work, new to records, probably new to everyone but a few specialists (and those present at the concert), yet no information is supplied, aside from the texts of the poems. And what a help they are! Here is a sample, taken at random, from number five, *Jolly Rutterkin*:

Rutterkin can speak no English,
His tongue runneth all on buttered fish
Besmeared with grease about his dish
Like a rutter hoyda.

Or here is a specimen from number four, *Jane Scroop* (*Her lament for Phillip Sparrow*):

The bird of Araby
That potentially
May never die,
A phoenix is
This hearse that must bless
With aromatic gums
That cost great sums
The way of thurification
To make a fumigation.

There may be some meaning to all this, but so far it has eluded this writer. Even with an intelligent analysis the work would be difficult of access; and with nothing at all, the performance must remain, for at least one listener, a mystery. Nor is there anything about the music or the poems that tempts one to go any further. W.

Gregorian Chants. Mt. Angel Seminary Gregorian Choir (Oregon) conducted by Dom David Nicholson, O. S. B. 1-12" disc (*GIOA-MA-LP-1) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Puer natus in Bethlehem* (Mode I); *O Filii et Filiae* (Mode II); *Dominus dixit ad me* (Mode II); *Kyrie "Rector cosmi pie"* (Mode II); *Ave Maria* (Mode VIII); *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (Mode IV); *Salve Mater* (Mode V); *Laudes ab hincmari* (Mode I); *Sanctus XI* (Orbis factor, Mode II); *Viri Galilaei* (Mode VII); *Alleluia, vidi mus stellam* (Mode II); *Regina Caeli* (Mode VI); *Litanie of the Sacred Heart* (Mode I).

The present choir is composed of forty young men who are studying for the priesthood at the Benedictine Abbey of Mt. Angel located about forty miles south of Portland, Oregon. This choir was founded by its present director, Father David Nicholson, O.S.B. and "is dedicated to bringing the simple and quiet beauty of the ancient plainchant to the people via the concert stage." The choir has made numerous appearances in concert, on the radio and television, and has appeared in a Technicolor film, "They Heard the Angels Sing."

This disc proves that plainchant may be appreciated by the average music lover for its musical beauty alone if it is presented as Father Nicholson presents it on this record.

OPERA

Leoncavallo: I Pagliacci (complete). (Sung in Italian). Clara Petrella (soprano); Mario del Monaco, Piero di Palma (tenors); Aldo Protti, Afro Poli (baritones); Chorus and Orchestra of the Academy of St. Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. Three sides, and **Operatic Recital**. Mario del Monaco (tenor) with Chorus and Orchestra of the Accademy of St. Cecilia (Rome) conducted by Alberto Erede. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-880/1) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: *Pagliacci*—Prologue; *La Forza del Destino*—*La vita è inferno al' infelice* (recit), *O tu che in seno* (aria); *Rigoletto*—*Questa o quella*; *Rigoletto*—*La donna è mobile*; *La Gioconda*—*Cielo e mar*; *La Juive*—*Rachel, quand du Seigneur*.

With five recordings of Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci* now available it seems like a good time to stop and evaluate them. The four previous versions, two on RCA Victor and one each on Cetra and Columbia all leave a little to be desired, as does this newest release on London.

I Pagliacci without a great dramatic tenor—one should say a great Italian dramatic tenor—will always be a little less than it could and should be. Gigli, for example, is a great Italian tenor but Canio makes demands on his dramatic abilities that he does not always meet satisfactorily. Bjorling and Tucker have the vocal equipment but not the temperament. The tenor of the Cetra set was almost woefully inadequate vocally but he had a degree of fire and spirit that helped him over the rough spots. Del Monaco, the Canio of the present set, has lots of voice but little else. There is almost no attempt on his part to realize any of the character. He roars and bellows his way through the score in a manner that tears passion to shreds, and his Canio becomes an almost sub-human caricature.

The same general strictures might also be repeated concerning the different Neddas and Tonios (with the notable exception of Victoria de los Angeles' vocally magnificent characterization). In this London set Nedda, in the person of Clara Petrella is quite adequate but not particularly distinguished. This is also true of Aldo Protti as Tonio.

The conductors of the various performances also vary widely from the fine job turned in by Renato Cellini (RCA Victor) and Simonetto (Cetra) to the mediocre one of Cleva (Columbia). Erede's is a workmanlike presentation but lacks the necessary imagination to make it memorable. Recording techniques also come into the picture—RCA Victor has the best (*V-LM-6106), Cetra perhaps the poorest. The older Victor set (*V-LCT-6010) is also only fair. The present London recording is quite acceptable.

On the fourth side of this set del Monaco sings

a group of arias in a stentorian fashion. Included is the "Prologue" from *Pagliacci* sung in the original key (i.e., for baritone). One feels that Sgr. del Monaco should be above such tricks—he is still a tenor.

What, then, does all this add up to? First, there is no completely satisfactory recording. Secondly, most of the performances possess a degree of merit, depending on one's personal taste. This corner would rate the five available sets as follows: (1.) RCA Victor (*V-LM-6106), (2.) RCA Victor (*V-LCT-6010), (3.) Cetra, (4.) London and (5.) Columbia.

Please, no more *Pagliacci*'s unless the services of a tenor having the proper qualifications can be engaged.

W.

Excerpts from Rameau Operas. Nadine Sautereau, Flore Wend (sopranos); Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano); Paul Derenne, Jean Maciet (tenors); Bernard Demigny (baritone); Doda Conrad (bass); Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble directed by Nadia Boulanger. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9683) \$5.85.

CONTENTS: *Dardanus*—Excerpts from Act II; *Castor et Pollux*—Minuet from the Prologue; *Hippolyte et Aricie*—Excerpt from Act V; *Dardanus*—Excerpt from Act III; *Les Indes Galantes*—Excerpt from Entré II; *Hippolyte et Aricie*—O disgrâce cruelle, Overture and Fanfare; Ballet figuré (orchestra); *Castor et Pollux*—Excerpt from Act IV; *Les Fêtes d'Hébé*—Excerpts; *Platée*—Excerpt.

One of the brightest stars in the early 18th century French musical firmament was Jean-Phillipe Rameau. Not too well represented on LP records, this disc will, to a limited extent, make his music known to the record buying public.

Nadia Boulanger, who is well known for her investigations of old French music, has gathered together a vocal ensemble and some instrumentalists and they have recorded excerpts from some of the operas that have, heretofore, been only names in the music histories and dictionaries. There are excerpts from *Dardanus* (1739), *Les Indes Gallantes* (1735) and *Platée* (1749) that will undoubtedly be new to most listeners.

Of the singers, Mlles. Kolassi and Wend are excellent while Messrs. Derenne and Demigny carry off the honors on the sword side. Doda Conrad, the once fine basso, sounds very poor here in the first *Dardanus* excerpt. Miss Sautereau is fair but not distinguished.

The music, which should be of far more importance than the musicians, is primarily of historic interest. Further, one has an uneasy feeling that the scores have been "arranged"—the instrumentation is obviously a modern one and the singers are singing in a modern manner. This is not intended as overt criticism; rather this reviewer feels that Nadia Boulanger and Decca should have furnished some information concerning the music and how it has been "restored," as it were, rather than presenting

it, as they have done, merely by giving a few historical facts about each opera and a brief outline of the story. The majority of persons interested in this music are also vitally interested in the performance data which, unfortunately, is totally lacking. Few of us have access to the scores of the originals and are thus dependent for such information upon the issuing company. Decca, in failing to supply this necessary data, may be said to have struck out with the bases full.

W.

d'Albert: Das Tiefland (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus of the Vienna State Opera and Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by F. Charles Adler. 3-12" discs in album (*SPA-40/42) \$17.85.

One evening, over twenty years ago, the writer spent a very dull several hours in the Philadelphia Academy of Music listening to a performance of d'Albert's *Tiefland* as presented by the Philadelphia Grand Opera Company (or was it the Civic Opera?). Curious to see if the dullness was due to youth or to d'Albert, he played the present recording (a first, incidentally) and found out, to his own satisfaction, that youth was not at fault—*Tiefland* is dull going.

Someone, in a very uncritical moment, referred to the opera as a "German *Carmen*," to which it can be replied facetiously that it does remind one of *Carmen*, it is so different. The plot is a sordid one and immoral to boot (the murderer goes unpunished). Musically the score rolls on with not even a page or two of originality or humor to lighten it. Obviously the work has never been popular in this country. The Metropolitan mounted it in its 1908-09 season; and although Emmy Destinn was entrusted with the leading role, the piece only achieved four performances. In Germany, however, it has been relatively popular for reasons that are not known to this reviewer.

The cast is of the calibre that, unfortunately, one has come to associate with Central European recordings. A group of adequate singers who move through their parts in an almost mechanical fashion (not that they could do much else with this opus) and, when it is all over, one's reaction is that the whole affair was "an expense of spirit in a waste of time."

SPA's recording is good and Adler's direction seems sure and coherent. But what is the use of all this when the *raison d'être* is *Tiefland*? W.

Donizetti: Lucia di Lammermoor (complete). (Sung in Italian). Dolores Wilson (soprano); Gianni Poggi (tenor); Anselmo Colzani (baritone); Silvio Maionica (bass); Orchestra and Chorus of the Opera di Milano conducted by Franco Capuana. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-232) \$18.50.

Donizetti's hardy perennial, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, receives, in this release, its second LP recording. The early Cetra set was notable for the Lucia of Lina Pagliughi and also for the very good Edgardo of Giovanni Malipiero; but the technical limitations

of the recording militate, to a certain extent, against its wide acceptance today. So it might be argued that, despite its very real artistic excellence, a new recording would be in order.

This would all have been well had this new release possessed some of the artistic merit of its predecessor to match the excellent sound but, alas, such is not the case. Lucia, in the person of Dolores Wilson, is a tame affair. There are the usual vocal acrobatics, without meaning; there is no expressiveness, no warmth to her vocalizing to make it credible. Miss Wilson's voice, in this recording, is rather hard, accurate and almost colorless. Gianni Poggi, a better than average Italian tenor sings a very fine Edgardo, one that is notable for its warmth, expressiveness and the absence of objectionable vocal mannerisms. Some of these qualities may be accentuated by Miss Wilson's robot-like Lucy, however. Anselmo Colzani as Ashton is run-of-the-mill; his voice always seems muffled—not a very satisfactory baritone. The lesser roles, the chorus and orchestra are all pretty good but not exceptional and this reviewer is old fashioned enough to think that all recorded performances should be on the exceptional side, or else what is the use of preserving them?

Maestro Capuana's direction here, as in his other recorded operas, is distinguished by his ability to keep things moving without being brisk. He does a good job considering some of the forces at hand.

Urania's recording, as intimated before, is good and there is the usual fine libretto and pictures this company always supplies.

W.

Menotti: Amahl and the Night Visitors (excerpts).

Chet Allen (boy soprano), Rosemary Kuhlmann and members of the original NBC Television cast with orchestra and chorus conducted by Thomas Schippers. 1-7" disc (ØV-ERA-120) \$1.58.

CONTENTS: *Don't cry, mother dear; March; Shepherds' Chorus; Shepherds' Dance; Have you seen a child?; All that Gold.*

Here is a lot of opera for the money. RCA Victor has issued this "Extended Play" 45 rpm record of excerpts from its original cast recording of the complete *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (*V-LM-1701, TNR Nov. '52). A fine disc for those whose budget or tastes do not run to complete opera recordings.

Operatic Arias. Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) with orchestra conducted by Fausto Cleva. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4730) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Traviata*—Ah! fors' e lui & Addio del pasato; *Bohème*—Musetta's Waltz Song & Mimi's Farewell; *Faust*—The King of Thule & Jewel Song; *Carmen*—Micaëla's Air; *Andrea Chénier*—La mama morta.

Miss Kirsten's many admirers will welcome the opportunity this record affords to hear her in seven familiar arias from five well-known and much-

beloved operas. Miss Kirsten is in top form, and she is ably supported by fine orchestras under the distinguished direction of Fausto Cleva.

VIOLIN

Lalo: Symphonie Espagnole, Op. 21. Alfredo Campoli (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-763) \$5.95.

This is the best Campoli recording to come our way. Campoli is a much admired violinist throughout Britain, and he has made numerous records for London; but this one appeals to us more than his previous efforts. His handling of the many technical difficulties in this score shows him to be a fiddler of the highest order. The principal competition for this disc is by Heifetz and by Menuhin. Menuhin plays all five movements, as does Campoli; but Heifetz omits the third movement, Intermezzo, as is frequently done in concert performances. Heifetz is admittedly the most sensational, his technical prowess shines with real dazzle in this work, and Victor's reproduction is very close and clearly etched (*V-LM-127). Menuhin does not enjoy reproduction as revealing as Heifetz's, nor as smooth and clear as Campoli; nor is his playing as even as Campoli's. We would eliminate Menuhin, and let the choice rest between Heifetz and Campoli. Our preference would be Campoli, because the work is complete and the reproduction more pleasing, in addition to which he receives superb orchestral collaboration from van Beinum.

The *Symphonie Espagnole* remains Lalo's most enduring composition and is one of the major works for violin and orchestra in this repertoire. Bizet, Chabrier, and Lalo produced works in the Iberian idiom at about the same time. Lalo, however, had Spanish blood, and his work is convincing in style even if it could not be called authentic. The success of the *Symphonie Espagnole* was nearly certain, since it was written for the great Spanish violinist. Pablo Sarasate, with whom Lalo was on terms of intimate friendship. The stimulus of a virtuoso brought out the best qualities of Lalo. The original version of the work had four movements only, the Intermezzo being added later by the composer. S.

VOCAL

A Recital of German Lieder and Arie Antiche. Irma Kolassi (mezzo-soprano) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-747) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Widmung*, Op. 25, No. 1; *Die Lotosblume*, Op. 25, No. 7; *In der Fremde*, Op. 39, No. 1 (Schumann). *Der Musensohn*, Op. 92, No. 1; *Du bist die Ruh'*, Op. 59, No. 3; *Der Erlkönig*, Op. 1 (Schubert). *Vezzosete e care pupillette* (Falcondieri); *Ah, mio cor* (Handel); *Chi vuol la zin-*

garella (Paisiello); *Amarilli mia bella* (Caccini); *Se florindo e fedele, Gia il sole dal gange* (Scarlatti); *Lasciatemi morire* (Monteverdi); *Intorno all'idol mio* (Cesti).

Irma Kolasi follows her record of French songs (TNR Oct. '53) with this one devoted to German *lieder* and old Italian airs. To be honest, this disc is not as good as its predecessor. Miss Kolassi is not in her element here, and the music does not "come off."

Of the *lieder*, the Schumann songs are, perhaps, the best sung of the group. And yet, even here, a certain lack of understanding is noticeable in *Widmung* and *In der Fremde*—another case, so frequent nowadays, of the singer being note perfect and little else. The Schubert songs, all magnificent music, are little more than empty shells.

The *arie antiche* seem, by and large, to be sung awkwardly—although this may be due less to a lack of vocal method than to an inability, as it were, on the part of the singer, to wed words and music. The selections are well chosen; the little arias from *I Zingari in Fiera* (Paisiello) and *Alcina* (Handel) are interesting, almost charming, even in these somewhat labored performances. At the end of the record, though, due to Kolassi's mechanical vocalization, one has a feeling of monotony, a fate the sparkling music does not deserve.

Martin Cooper's notes are good but arranged in a heterogenous manner so that one must search for the comments that apply to the song being sung—the order of the music on the record and that of the commentary on the jacket are different—a particularly gratuitous annoyance. Nor can this reviewer see the need, at current prices, to susbtitute a piano where a harpsichord or a small orchestra is obviously called for, as in the case of the *arie antiche*. This remark is made with all due respect for Mlle. Bonneau's exquisite accompaniments.

PIANO

Bach: (6) English Suites. Alexander Borovsky (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-7852) \$11.90.

Bach: (6) English Suites. Reine Gianoli (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-306) \$18.50.

Here we have two recorded versions of Bach's (6) English Suites by pianists who are both noted for their interpretations of the great Johann Sebastian; we find little to choose between them. However, economically there is quite a difference. Vox by putting one suite and part of another on one record side gets all six on two LP discs and thus effects quite a saving, \$11.90 against \$18.50. Westminster devotes one record side to each suite and thus uses three discs. This is a very convenient arrangement, but whether it is worth the additional cost is something one must decide for himself. Also Westminster includes with its set a nicely printed miniature score

of some 86 pages, which is certainly of considerable value and might be enough to tip the scales in its favor.

Giesecking Recital. Walter Giesecking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4646) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: Suite No. 5 in E (Handel); Partita No. 6 in E minor (Bach); Sonata in C, L. 443 (Scarlatti); Sonata in E minor, L. 275 (Scarlatti); Sonata in E, L. 23 (Scarlatti); Sonata in D minor, L. 413 ("Pastorale") (Scarlatti); Sonata in D, L. 424 (Scarlatti).

The art of Walter Giesecking is highly appreciated by many American music lovers, and a new record by this distinguished pianist is always an occasion of moment. The present LP disc contains a recital of selections by three outstanding 18th century composers. Mr. Giesecking has given excellent performances, and Columbia has supplied the best of piano reproduction.

Szymanowski: Symphonie Concertante for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 60. Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Alfred Wallenstein. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43.** Artur Rubinstein (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Walter Süsskind (TNR Jan. '49). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-1744) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1744) \$5.72.

RCA Victor has taken Rubinstein's outstanding reading of the ever-popular Rachmaninoff *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (formerly *V-LM-26, TNR Jan. '49) and coupled with a new and equally outstanding performance of Szymanowski's *Symphonie Concertante* (first on LP). Admirers of Rubinstein's impeccable technique take note!

Chopin: Waltzes (complete). Guiomar Novaës (piano). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8170) \$5.95.

Despite the fact that these Chopin Waltzes have been recorded on LP discs by Brailowsky, Kilenyi, Lipatti and Pennario, we predict that the present disc will enjoy a large sale. Novaës has a great and enthusiastic coterie of admirers in the United States, many of whom will doubtless feel that no one can excel this distinguished Brazilian pianist in such selections as the Chopin Waltzes.



HARPSICHORD

In Memoriam: Edith Weiss Mann. Edith Weiss Mann (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5214) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Sonata in C minor (Telemann); Sonata in F (Pepusch); Sonata in E minor (Telemann) (with Alfred Mann, recorder, & Lois Wann, oboe); Sonata in F (A. Scarlatti) (with Alfred Mann, recorder, Lois Wann, oboe, & Albert Mell, violin).

We can think of no better way to introduce this

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

Ø indicates 45 rpm.



unique recording than to quote from the notes of Edward Tatnall Canby which accompany this disc:

"This recording is presented as a memorial to Edith Weiss Mann who died in May 1951. It was made in her apartment at a time when this indomitable musician was already too ill to undertake outside engagements. The guiding strength, the perfect taste of her performance of the continuo parts, in spite of the difficult circumstances, is no more than those of us who knew her would have expected from a woman whose knowledge, character, and wide-range musicianship had made her a leader in this field for almost a half century.

"The present recording, made by the writer with the assistance of several willing engineers, is not presented as a perfect example of the new electronic art, but we feel that, under the circumstances, its technical problems were satisfactorily solved."

Elisabethan Keyboard Music. Charles Koenig (harp-sichord). 1-12" disc (*EMS-236) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: A Toy (Anon.); Fantasia (Morley); The Primerose (Pearson); Pavana (Johnson—arr. Farnaby); Corranto (Anon.); Fayne Would I Wedd (Farnaby); In Nomine (Bull); The Fall of the Leafe (Pearson); Pavana (Bull); Galiarda (Bull).

This LP disc contains a group of pleasing little melodies that date from the time of Elizabeth and James I and are traditionally played in a highly artistic manner by Charles Koenig. If you would like to live in another musical age for a brief half-hour or so, the present disc is indicated.



ORGAN

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor. One side, and **Bach: Prelude and Fugue in E minor.** Robert Noehren, playing the organ of Grace Episcopal Church, Sandusky (Ohio). 1-12" disc (AUDIO-PHILE AP-9) \$5.95.

This Audiophile record is designed primarily for hi-fi fans. The attempt has been made to reproduce a church organ as nearly perfectly as possible at this stage of the art of recording. Audiophile believes that the best results are obtained when the recording is made to play at the relatively high speed of 78 rpm with a one-mil stylus (the same needle that is used to play LP discs). Because of the narrow grooves the present record will play about eight minutes to a side despite the fact that it revolves at 78 rpm. It has been pressed of clear vinylite with a grainless red dye and thus surface noise it entirely eliminated. If you have a truly high fidelity reproducer, you may expect this disc to give you very nearly perfect organ reproduction.

We should indeed be remiss if we did not mention that Mr. Noehren is an organist of the first rank and that he has the advantage of having for these recordings a particularly fine instrument upon which to demonstrate his art.

DICTION

The Columbia Literary Series: Great Authors Reading Their Own Works. 12-12" discs plus one descriptive book in genuine leather carrying case. (*C-SL-190) \$100.

CONTENTS: W. Somerset Maugham (*The Three Fat Women of Antibes; Gigolo and Gigolette*). Aldous Huxley (*Brave New World*—Introduction, Linda's Death). John Collier (*Mary; De Mortuis; Back for Christmas*). Sacheverell Sitwell (*Spain*—An Account of a Bull Fight, Flamenco, The Doncel, Spanish Music, An Apotheosis of Spain; *Mauretania*—An excerpt, Sabratha; *Roumanian Journey*—A description of one of the great horse fairs in the Moldavian Plains, Roumanian Farewell). John Steinbeck (*The Snake; Johnny Bear*). Katherine Anne Porter (*Flowering Judas*—Beginning, Conclusion).

Edith Sitwell (Excerpts from *A Poet's Notebook* and *A Notebook on William Shakespeare and The Canticle of the Rose and Other Poems*). Christopher Isherwood (*Goodbye to Berlin*—A Berlin Diary; *Prater Violet; The Condor and the Cows*). Truman Capote (*Children on Their Birthdays*—Beginning, Conclusion). Edna Ferber (*The Gay Old Dog*—Beginning, Conclusion). Sir Osbert Sitwell (Left Hand, Right Hand—Introduction, Entry of the Muses, The Sargent Group). William Saroyan (Excerpts from *Jim Dandy*; Excerpts from *Rock Wagram; The Parable of the Loveliness of Faith in God and How It Saved the Life of at Least One Good Man*—Beginning, Conclusion; Excerpt from *Don't Go Away Mad; Common Prayer*).

"This series of recordings was begun on October 24, 1950, when Mr. Somerset Maugham kindly consented to come to the Columbia Recording Studios . . ." begins Goddard Lieberson in his excellent preface to this remarkable set of records. And Mr. Lieberson goes on: ". . . part of my reason for starting this series was, if not to frustrate death's capacity for stilling the tongue, at least, to inaugurate archives which would perpetuate the sound of the writer's voice and therefore a dimension of his personality otherwise lost."

Mr. Lieberson bemoans the fact that such voices as those of Oscar Wilde, Marcel Proust, Henry James, Mark Twain, Walt Whitman, et al are now forever lost, yet the phonograph had been invented prior to their deaths. Feeling that ". . . since the writings of an author are an expression of his total psychic structure, his voice too (no matter of what quality) would express in some degree the spirit of the written words . . . Thus it is that dulcet tones, subtle gradations of volume, dramatic spacing, all carefully planned and rehearsed ahead of time, play no part in these readings," being, on the contrary, casual and exhibiting "unvarnished reality."

We have quoted liberally from Goddard Lieber-

son's preface to this set in the hopes of whetting the appetites of many of our readers. In view of the price tag, we do not see how this set can be a commercial success; yet a more worthy objective could scarcely be imagined. It is hardly necessary to add that the reproduction on these discs is above reproach.

Israel is Born. Documentary written and narrated by Arthur Holzman. 1-12" disc (*CAEDMON TC-2014) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Voices of Chaim Weizmann, David Ben Gurion, Ralph Bunche, Mohammed F. Jamali, Sir Alan Cunningham, Moshe Sharett, Chief Rabbi Herzog, Abba Eban, Count Folke Bernadotte, and others.

Arthur Holzman, who was a foreign correspondent in the Holy Land from 1947 to 1951, has written, edited and narrated this unusual documentary recording of the birth of Israel. Many of the recordings that are included were made on the spot by Mr. Holzman. He has done an excellent and exciting job in producing the present recording, which is history preserved in the modern electronic manner.

Rostand: Cyrano de Bergerac (excerpts). (in French). Herbert Roland and supporting cast directed by Eve Daniel. 1-12" disc (*PE-FRL-1526) \$5.95.

For those who have a full knowledge of spoken French, these excerpts from Rostand's famous *Cyrano de Bergerac* in its original tongue will hold great charm. For those who would like to improve their French diction, following this recording with the French text which is supplied should be of great help.

VIOLONCELLO

Bach: Sonata No. 1 in G for Violoncello solo. One side, and **Bach: Sonata No. 3 in C for Violoncello solo.** Antonio Janigro (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5217) \$5.95.

There are several recorded versions of Sonata No. 3 in C but this is the first of No. 1 in G to be made available on LP discs. These Sonatas for unaccompanied 'cello are sometimes known as Suites, probably because they are made up of a half-dozen or more short dance movements—Allemandes, Sarabandes, Gigues, etc. The celebrated Italian cellist, Antonio Janigro, who is well-known to American music lovers because of his many successful recordings under the Westminster label, gives performances on the present disc that should prove highly satisfactory, even to the most critical listeners.



The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Coloseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Hady Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyric-hord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceania, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv + 596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

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A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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IN OUR SEPTEMBER issue we reported that Urania had issued a disc entitled "High Fidelity Demonstration Record" (*UR-URLP-7084, \$4.17). Apparently this filled a great need of the hi-fi enthusiast, for both Capitol and Westminster have followed suit and issued demonstration records of their own. And the redoubtable Emory Cook has come through with another of his superior records, this time a little gem called "Speed the Parting Guest;" he aptly subtitles this one *A Hi Fi Bull in a Chime Shop*.

The Capitol disc stands out as an absolute "must" for the audiophile. Packaged in a plio-film envelope contained in a handsome box, this record comes complete with a 10-page insert giving full information about the contents of the disc, what to listen for, how to be certain your set is reproducing what is on this disc and so on; we found especially interesting the two pages called "Fidelity and Illusion," written by Charles Fowler, editor of *High Fidelity Magazine*.

The contents of the Capitol record are: *The Continental* (Ray Anthony & Orch.); *Studies in Percussion* (Pts. I & II) (Hal Rees); *Fog-horn Boogie* (Dick Stabile & Orch.); *Song from Moulin Rouge* (June Hutton with Alex Stordahl & Orch.); *Meet Mister Callaghan* (Les Paul); *Quiet Village* (Les Baxter & Orch.); *23° N—82° W* (Stan Kenton & Orch.); Glazounov: *The Seasons*—Finale (French Nat'l. Symphony Orch.—Désormière); Bloch: *Concerto Grosso*—1st Movement (Pittsburgh Symphony Orch.—Steinberg); Tchaikovsky: *Quartet No. 1 in D minor*—3rd movement (excerpts) (Hollywood String Quartet); Villa-Lobos: *Nonetto*—Finale (Roger Wagner Chorale & Concert Arts Ensemble—Wagner); Shostakovich: *Concerto in C minor*—4th movement (finale) (Victor Aller, piano, with Con-

cert Arts String Orch.—Slatkin); Copland: *Rodeo* (excerpt) (Ballet Theatre Orch.—Levine). 1-12" disc (*CL-SAL-9020) \$6.75.

The Westminster, unlike either the Urania or the Capitol, is solely for demonstration. Both Urania and Capitol have put whole movements or at least "completed" excerpts on their discs. Westminster has just given us snatches here and there, much like the audiophile might try to select from his library, to demonstrate a particular point or feature. Therefore, listing the contents of this disc would have little meaning; suffice it to say that it contains about two minutes of various constant tone frequencies, and there are tympani rolls, solo piano, piano with orchestra, violin and harpsichord, Flamencan guitar, Gypsy violin, French horns, etc. Included with this record is a sheet giving the equalization curve and a description of each excerpt. 1-12" disc (*WEST-DRB) \$3.50.

The Cook Sounds of Our Times record, "Speed the Parting Guest," has a most appropriate title. Drums, xylophone, sirens, tambourines, a wind machine—you name it, this has it when it comes to percussion, even to "1 Quoddyhead Horn (courtesy U. S. Coast Guard)." We can't imagine the guest who could sit all the way through this one. Mr. Cook has seen to it that this disc has the most faithful reproduction possible—seems a pity, though, to waste such lavish technical affection on all this noise! 1-10" disc (*SOT-1041) \$4.

If your local dealer cannot supply any or all of these discs, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 140

copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning December 1950 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.)

NEW LP RELEASES

Brahms: *Quintet No. 2 in G, Op. 11*. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims, Milton Thomas (violas); Paul Tortelier (violoncello). One side, and Schumann: *Quintet in E-flat, Op. 44*. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Thomas (viola); Paul Tortelier (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4711) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '53).

Brahms: *Quartet No. 3 in C minor, Op. 60*. Joseph Szigeti (violin); Paul Tortelier (violoncello); Myra Hess (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4712) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '53).

Brahms: *Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18*. Isaac Stern, Alexander Schneider (violins); Milton Katims, Milton Thomas (violas); Pablo Casals, Madeline Foley (violoncellos). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4713) \$5.95. (TNR Nov. '53).

Casals Festival at Prades (1952). (Vol. I). Festival Soloists. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-182) \$17.85 (TNR Nov. '53).

CONTENTS: *Quintet No. 2 in G, Op. 11*; *Quartet No. 3 in C minor, Op. 60*; *Sextet No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 18* (Brahms). *Quintet in E-flat, Op. 44* (Schumann)

Casals Festival at Prades (1952). (Vol. II). Festival Soloists. 4-12" discs in album (*C-SL-183) \$23.80. (TNR Nov. '53).

CONTENTS: *Quintet in C, Op. 163*; *Trio No. 1 in B-flat, Op. 99*; *Trio No. 2 in E-flat, Op. 100*; *Sonata No. 5 in A, Op. 162* ("Duo"); *Variations on 'Trock'ne Blumen,' Op. 160* (Schubert).

R. Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier* (highlights). V. Ursuleac, A. Kern (sopranos); G. von Milinkovic (mezzo-soprano); G. Hann (baritone); L. Weber (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of the State Opera (Munich)—Krauss. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8200) \$5.95. (TNR Jan. '53).

Handel: *The Messiah* (highlights). Soloists, Luton Choral Society and Special Choir, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra—Beecham, with H. Dawson (organ). 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1130) \$5.72. (TNR Mar. '48).

ORCHESTRA



Franck: *Symphony in D minor*. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50023) \$5.95.

No conductor could be more welcomed before

American recording microphones than Paul Paray; this is the third disc of his to be issued. The reorganized Detroit Symphony Orchestra will prove keen competition for other American orchestras on the basis of what we have heard on these discs. His performance of the Franck *Symphony* is a masterpiece worthy of release against any of the dozen-odd other LP's in the catalog. Without being destructive to the score, he has injected a freshness and excitement into the music that others have failed to do. Particularly notable is the third and final movement, which under Paray's direction is something magnificent. There is much clarity in the orchestral playing, revealing parts of the score usually submerged in a welter of orchestral noise. This is also praise for the playing of the Detroiters, and their playing is deserving of the highest praise throughout the symphony. The first two movements are interpreted along conventional lines, but with an urgency and inspiration often missing in other performances. We would say this is the best Franck *Symphony* thus far on LP. The reproduction is typical of Mercury's Olympian Series, which to us is the best series on the market. Of the two dozen discs in this series there is not one sub-standard item in matters of reproduction (and the performances are all worth while too). The Mercury reproduction is a superb balance of realistic solo instruments, full orchestra sound at any volume, and good perspective and resonance. Their smooth surfaces never detract from their fine sound.

Little need be said of the Franck *Symphony*, except to remember that its first performance was greeted with hostility and a string of defaming adjectives. It seems incredible today that this romantic work could ever be misunderstood. Will they say that about some of today's reviews of new music several generations from now?

Mozart: Symphony No. 34 in C, K. 338. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 38 in D, K. 504** ("Prague"). Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50015) \$5.95.

Mozart: Symphony No. 25 in G minor, K. 183. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201**. Chamber Orchestra of the Danish State Radio conducted by Mogens Wöldike. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-1055) \$5.95.

Mozart: Symphony No. 40 in G minor, K. 550. One side, and **Haydn: Symphony No. 92 in G** ("Oxford"). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Josef Krips. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-780) \$5.95.

While nothing new appears on these three discs, each is a good disc, and at least one is outstanding. The best of the lot is easily the Mercury one of the Chicago Orchestra under Kubelik. The discipline of this orchestra in this recording is as high as we have ever heard it. The "Prague" has long been one of

our favorite Mozart symphonies, and we do not recall a more enjoyable performance than this. Nothing is overdone or pushed too hard, but it has a tremendous amount of energy and a fine razor-sharp precision. Such clean and perfect playing is a joy. Kubelik has produced a reading of great clarity and detail without making one conscious of the effort. The reproduction is as near perfection as one could wish. Much the same can be said for the other side of the disc, *Symphony No. 34* which, like the "Prague" is a three movement work without a Minuet. It is a light, gay, unpretentious work with a rollicking finale that caps the whole thing gloriously. We know of no more enjoyable Mozart disc than this one.

The Haydn Society disc is notable for the fact that (according to the program notes) Wöldike uses a string orchestra consisting of five first violins, five second violins, four violas, two violoncello and two contrabassi (with bassoons reinforcing the bass line). Each symphony, of course, calls also for woodwinds and horns. Playing this after the Mercury disc is hardly a fair thing, and we do not recommend hearing them together. For those who like a reduced orchestra in their Mozart, this disc is a beautiful example. Wöldike is a man of good taste and fine style and he does these works soundly in the idiom. The reproduction is very good.

The London Symphony Orchestra under their regular conductor, Josef Krips, plays with style and finish on a beautifully recorded London disc. The Haydn "Oxford" is as good as several other LP's of the work and better recorded than any of them; the Mozart 40th is up against plenty of competition, but Krips can hold his own very well. He has an easy Viennese touch that manages to probe the depths of this work. The result is a fine reading. If the coupling appeals to you, this is a good disc from the performance and recording standpoints. S.

Hindemith: Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Weber. One side, and **Schönberg: (5) Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16.** Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Rafael Kubelik. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50024) \$5.95.

Copland: Appalachian Spring. One side, and **Copland: El Salon Mexico.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-439) \$5.95.

Rozsa: Theme, Variations and Finale, Op. 13. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Miklos Rozsa. One side, and **Rozsa: Concerto for String Orchestra, Op. 17.** London String Orchestra conducted by Miklos Rozsa. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7690) \$5.95.

Lovers of modern music attention! First, we have, from a technical standpoint, one of the finest hi-fi recordings that has come to our notice. It is the Mercury record containing the Hindemith and Schönberg selections. In addition to the superb reproduc-

tion, it contains one of Hindemith's most popular works. It is easy to see why *Symphonic Metamorphoses on Themes of Weber* should catch the fancy of many music lovers. It is bright, sophisticated and abounds in pleasing melodies, and it is easily enjoyable. However, the Schönberg (5) *Pieces for Orchestra*, which dates from 1909 and "has a rhythm, as the blood has its pulsating rhythm, as all life in us has its rhythm; which has a tonality, but only as the sea or the storm has its tonality; which has harmonies, though we cannot grasp or analyze them nor can we trace its themes," is definitely for those who like to expose themselves to the unusual.

Copland's *Appalachian Spring* and *El Salon Mexico* are reasonably well-known and have been generally accepted by discerning American music lovers. Vanguard has supplied highly satisfactory recordings by the Vienna State Opera Orchestra under the brilliant direction of Franz Litschauer.

The last disc in this group of three will introduce to many record collectors the music of the Hungarian composer, Miklos Rozsa. Before coming to the United States in 1940, his works were well received in Europe; and many of them were published by the famous firm of Breitkopf and Härtel. At present Mr. Rozsa resides in California, where he devotes his time to teaching and composition. He is a member of the faculty of the school of music at the University of Southern California. Rozsa states that he is a Neo-classicist and that he has drawn heavily on the folklore of his native Hungary for inspiration. The samples of Rozsa's music on the present disc we found quite interesting and well worth a second hearing. They are in the Hungarian idiom and are easy and pleasant to listen to. R.

Mozart: Symphony No. 4 in D, K. 19. And **Mozart: Symphony No. 14 in A, K. 114.** One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 10 in G, K. 74.** And **Mozart: Symphony No. 11 in D, K. 84.** Winterthur Symphony Orchestra conducted by Otto Ackerman. 1-12" disc (*CH-CHS-1166) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade in E-flat, K. 375. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in C minor, K. 388.** Wind Instrument Ensemble of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-7490) \$5.95.

Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525 ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Felix Prohaska. One side, and **Schubert: (5) Deutsche Tänze for Strings.** Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Franz Litschauer. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-435) \$5.95.

Of the making of many Mozart records there is no end, and the record companies themselves are surprised at the seemingly endless demand for them. Such a state leads to recording of previously unrecorded works, most of which would not be heard at all if were not for records. The first sixteen symphonies of Mozart are in this category. The Concert

Hall disc is one of four which present the first sixteen, four per record, in their first and only recordings. Otto Ackermann maintains a high standard of performance and a laudable interpretive level. These performances have enthusiasm in an honest way that does not inflate the music beyond its true stature. The disc is well recorded.

The Serenades, K. 375 and K. 388, are already in the catalogs in two other recordings—each using the same couplings. The disc by Kell and his chamber group (*D-DL-9540) is different from either of the others in that it does not have the freedom and abandon of the Viennese players. Kell's, is, nevertheless, a valid and worthy pair of performances which sound well. The Viennese groups—the present disc and the Wind Octet from the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (*WEST-WL-5021)—have much in common, and we find little to choose between them. It is an individual choice between Kell and the Viennese groups, and also between the two Viennese groups if your taste leans towards their style. All three discs enjoy good reproduction.

The most beloved of all Mozart Serenades, and one of his most popular works, is the *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. In well over a dozen LP diskings, only a couple emerge as really decent readings. The unaffected charm and simplicity of this work eludes many conductors. Prohaska's effort may be credited to the better ones. Litschauer offers the second LP version of the lovely Schubert *German Dances*, in nicely tailored performances. Vanguard's reproduction is good, with too much treble which can easily be compensated. S.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 9 in D minor. Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Jascha Horenstein. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8040) \$5.95.

Bruckner: Symphony No. 7 in E. Three sides, and **Franck: Psyché** (Symphonic Poem). Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-852/3) \$11.90.

The Bruckner *Ninth Symphony*, like Schubert's, remained unfinished. Of the last movement only sketches survive. They indicate that Bruckner intended to close his *Ninth* with a gigantic fugue. It was to "the good Lord" that Bruckner addressed himself in his *Ninth Symphony* when, at the age of 70, he felt the approach of death and sought to express through his art, the summing up of his life and the contemplation of last things (the symphony was dedicated "an meinen lieben Gott"). It is a magnificent work for those who can sit down, relax, and enjoy the whole work for the music it is. It is played here in the original version, not the horribly edited versions which are now, fortunately not being used. Jascha Horenstein has long been a good interpreter of Bruckner's music; he offers a beautiful reading of this work which would be hard to surpass. The reproduction is of fine fidelity.

The Bruckner *Seventh Symphony* has always been one of our favorites of this composer's works, probably because of the superb second movement. While this movement is as long as all four movements of many other symphonies, it is a lovely creation. There is much in this symphony that seems to stem from religious fervor, and many are the words that have been written describing Bruckner's music as gothic edifices of sound and so forth. Eduard van Beinum and the Concertgebouw Orchestra play this work as profoundly as we ever recall hearing it. The tonal quality of the orchestra is notable, with the brasses holding up well, and the horns being of faithful intonation. Van Beinum has the unhurried approach to Bruckner, which may prove ponderous in some of the symphonies, but which serves this particular one well. We would call it the best reading on LP, and that includes the matter of reproduction, which London has handled with its accustomed skill; it is one of London's best recordings of the Amsterdam orchestra. Franck's *Psyché* is the fourth side filler in the album; it is played with charming finesse by van Beinum, who omits the choral part in this performance. S.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5, Op. 47. Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra of New York conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. 1-12" disc (*ML-4739) \$5.95.

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5, Op. 47. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7098) \$5.95.

In November 1952 we welcomed the first LP recording of this work (*VX-PL-7610) by Horenstein, except for the Columbia transfer of its 78 rpm recording by Rodzinski. At that time we lamented the fact that there were rather few recordings of Shostakovich symphonies considering their merit. We now have two new issues of the *Fifth*, probably the greatest of all his symphonies. Both of these new ones supersede previous recordings on the basis of reproduction. In matters of performance, at least one—Mitropoulos—supersedes the others. Mitropoulos is always at his best in modern scores, and he has turned in no more vital and truly magnificent reading of any work than we find in this instance. He has a few individual touches that point up some features rather cleverly. The whole work is ablaze from the opening bars with an intensity that is usually missing from recorded performances. We cannot imagine anyone not getting a real thrill from this disc. The music is exciting and the performance unflaggingly underlines all the excitement. Columbia's reproduction is distinguished for clarity and power, and plenty of power with clarity is a very desirable asset in this work.

If it were not for our being so impressed with Mitropoulos, we would have more to say about Borsamsky and his effort, for it is indeed a valiant

one of many merits. Borsamsky, give and take a little, is the equal of the previous recordings, but to our ears he does not match Mitropoulos. The *Urania* reproduction is very hi-fi; on our set it is a bit thin and shrill, but on some players this may not be true.

It would seem, by now, that the days of controversy about Shostakovich's *Fifth Symphony* should be past. Whatever the side issues may be, the music emerges as a dynamic work of originality, great strength, and also of brilliant wit. This stirring music has a positive attitude, a firm belief in life, and an admirable balance between poignant melodies and passages of flashing brilliance. It stands solidly in the line of famous "Fifth" symphonies by the greatest composers. S.

Strauss: Waltzes and Polkas. Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra conducted by William Steinberg. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8222) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: Acceleration Waltz; Adele Waltz; Emperor Waltz; Pizzicato Polka; Perpetuum Mobile; Tritsch-Tratsch Polka; Annen Polka; Champagne Polka; Thunder and Lightning Polka.

Strauss: Waltzes. Mantovani and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-685) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Blue Danube; Voices of Spring; Roses from the South; Village Swallows; 1001 Nights; Treasure Waltz; Emperor Waltz; Wine, Women and Song; Acceleration; Tales from the Vienna Woods; You and You; Morning Papers.

Strauss Miniatures. Columbia Broadcasting Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Barlow. 1-12" disc (*C-RL-3020) \$2.98.

CONTENTS: Serail-Tänze (Reconstructed—Filippi); Explosions Polka (Reconstructed—Filippi); Electrofor Polka, Op. 297; Festival-Quadrille; Paroxysmen Walzer; Motoren Walzer; Ballg'schichten Walzer; Telegraphische Depeschen; Champagner Polka; Schnellpost Polka.

Johann and Josef Strauss Polkas. Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Anton Paulik. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-438) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Vergnügenzug; Leichtes Blut; Freikugeln; Unter Donner und Blitz; Tritsch-Tratsch; Annen; Eljen a Magyar (Johann Strauss). Feuerfest; Frauenherz; Aus der Ferne; Ohne Sorgen (Josef Strauss). Pizzikato Polka (Johann & Josef Strauss).

The public never seems to get enough of Strauss recordings! Here are four more LP discs containing a vast number of selections. Three of them are good examples of "high fidelity" reproduction—the Columbia recording by Howard Barlow was made before "hi-fi" came into the picture; however, despite its age it sounds very good and is a good value at its low price.

Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. One side, and **Respighi: Antiche Danze ed Arie per Liuto** (Suite No. 3). Chamber Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Matthieu Lange. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7093) \$5.95.

Stravinsky: Apollon Musagète (ballet). One side, and **Stravinsky: Pulcinella Suite.** Vienna Chamber Orchestra conducted by Heinrich Hollreiser. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8270) \$5.95.

Of the two recordings of Stravinsky's *Pulcinella Suite* we prefer the *Urania* version. The performance and the reproduction both seem superior to us. If you do not have a recording of the Respighi selection on the reverse side, then we strongly suggest that you choose the *Urania* disc. If you do, then it will have to up to you to weigh the matter and make your own decision.

Newman: The Robe (Music from the Film). Hollywood Symphony Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Alfred Newman, with Carole Richards (alto). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9012) \$5.85.

One of the biggest hits on the screen in recent months is the 20th Century-Fox production of *The Robe*. Alfred Newman supplied the musical score for this outstanding film and he has selected parts of it for this recording which he has directed personally. For those who have seen the picture this recording may mean much, and those, who will follow it with the comprehensive notes that Philip Dunne, the author of the screen play, has supplied, may find it interesting; but others, we should think would find it to be too much of a good thing. During the picture, we found the music highly dramatic and it aided greatly in pointing the story, but forty minutes of it without the picture was a bit too much for us.

CONCERTO



Beethoven: Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37. Rudolf Serkin (piano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4738) \$5.95.

A short while ago we reviewed a new Beethoven *Third Concerto* performed by Iturbi and did not care very much for it. At that time we again extolled the merits of the Lili Kraus disc (*VX-PL-7270), which has been our preferred reading. With this new one by Serkin and Ormandy, the Kraus disc is really challenged. Serkin is well known as a performer of Beethoven, and is considered one of the best in that field. His reading of the *Third* could do little but uphold his reputation, for it is a splendid statement of the score. There is no question about the style, and Serkin leaves no doubts about precise technical execution. There are none of the loud

turns and other annoying mannerisms of the Iturbi playing. As for the accompaniment by Ormandy and the Philadelphians versus soloist Iturbi conducting the RCA Victor Orchestra, there is everything in favor of the orchestral portion of Serkin's disc. Columbia has achieved a fine balance between solo instrument and orchestra, as well as a nice quality of piano tone. For those who own the Kraus disc, there is no need to regret it or consider a change; for those who are about to add this masterwork to their library, a hearing of both Kraus and Serkin is indicated, and well worth while. The choice of the existing LP's of the *Third* is clearly between these two versions.

Although it was composed in 1800, the *Third Concerto* was not performed until 1803. Beethoven was thoroughly aware of the great strides he had made in this work over the two earlier ones, and he delayed its publication until 1804, a year after its performance, so that he and no other might, for a time, be the one to perform it. "Musical policy necessitates keeping the best concertos to oneself for a while," he wrote his publishers. Things have changed; we doubt whether any contemporary composers would figure it that way. Times have also changed in the matter of concert programming. The first performance of the *Third* took place in Vienna with the composer as soloist. The program also included Beethoven's first two symphonies and his oratorio *The Mount of Olives*. S.

Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 in C minor. Edith Farnadi (piano) with the Vienna State Opera Orchestra conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5193) \$5.95.

Edith Farnadi, born in Budapest, began piano studies at the age of 7 years at the Budapest Academy. With a debut as a child prodigy at 9, she progressed continually, playing the Beethoven C major Concerto at 12 (directing the orchestra from the piano), and receiving her diploma at 17. During her studies at the Academy she won the Franz Liszt prize twice. From the time she received her diploma she became a professor at the Academy, where she remained until 1942. Since then she has concertized widely all over Europe. During her student days she had been a partner with the great violinist, Hubas, and played many times with Hubermann.

Miss Farnadi's playing in the Rachmaninoff *Concerto No. 2* is something undeniably great. Technically, she is of the first rank, and she has a goodly amount of power—power of good quality, not pounding. Her dynamic range is exceptional, which is, in turn, part of her interpretive assets. Miss Farnadi plays this work with a richly romantic style that goes the limit without becoming maudlin or destructive to the score. We thoroughly enjoyed her performance of the work. We believe this performance would have been one of the best on records, were it not for the detracting influence of

conductor Scherchen, particularly in the first movement. His idea of the music is maudlin, and we rather imagine his idea prevailed over the soloist. She seems to have won a small victory in the second and final movements. Westminster's reproduction is superb in every respect.

There are numerous other LP's of this work, ranging from the authoritative though feebly reproduced version by the composer himself, through readings by Sandor, Smith, Rubinstein, and Katchen, to the brilliant performance by Kapell. Most persons will find it a choice between Kapell or Farnadi. S.

Tchaikovsky: Concerto No. 1 in B-flat minor, Op.

23. Shura Cherkassky (piano) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Leopold Ludwig. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9605) \$5.85.

Whatever may be said of a new version of the Tchaikovsky *Concerto No. 1* at this point would hardly be as interesting as to say that this one is something entirely new and different. In all our listening experience we cannot recall ever having heard a performer take an overworked and threadbare piece such as this and make it sound like something new and great. The remarkable thing is that he has done this by disregarding former virtuoso notions of the music and beginning from scratch in a brand new type of thinking. The result is a more faithful exposition of the music as written than we have previously heard. As is so often the case when an interpreter comes up with a fresh slant on the music, it stems from a slower tempo. Where most pianists race through the work, Cherkassky adopts a more logical, even tempo, which results in fewer tempo changes and excessive rubatos. It is difficult to describe in detail just what Cherkassky has done, but it can be said that from the very start, right through to the final pages, he has re-evaluated the whole work. The result is easily the most enjoyable performance in our memory, and the outstanding feature of the whole effort is that the music is more beautiful.

Cherkassky was born in Odessa, Russia, in 1911. He received his early musical training from his mother, who was herself a concert pianist. Following his emigration to America, Cherkassky studied at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia under the world-renowned pianist, Josef Hofmann. We would imagine that some of the artist's remarkable thinking is a product of his studying under Hofmann. As far as his technique is concerned, it is of the very best; you never heard more beautiful passage work, as pearly and smooth as possible. And his dynamic gradations are superb, with fortissimo effects that have tone, and are not pounded out.

Leopold Ludwig is in line for a good share of praise in this effort. His accompaniment is as beautiful as the soloist's performance. There are orchestral details heard for the first time in this recording. We urge anyone who has ever liked this work to hear

this unusual performance, which is also a fine bit of reproduction.

S.

Dvořák: Concerto in A minor, Op. 53. One and one-half sides, and **Glière: Romance for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 3.** David Oistrakh (violin) with the State Orchestra of the USSR conducted by Kiril Kondrashin. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6016) \$5.95.

David Oistrakh has become something of a legendary figure in this country via his recordings. Certainly it is a capable technician that emerges from this disc; but it is difficult to judge his musicianship from a concerto such as the Dvořák, for it is essentially a virtuoso piece (Joachim had a considerable part in shaping the final version) and as such receives "the treatment."

The general lines of this recorded performance follow the traditional manner; in fact, unless the soloist decides to be plain arbitrary, there is little else he can do—it is not great music in the sense that the violin concerti of Beethoven or Sibelius are—it is more in the Tchaikovsky-Glazounov class.

Admirers of the concerto will probably already have purchased the Miltstein version on RCA Victor, so it remains for the enthusiasts of Oistrakh's style to buy this disc which, incidentally, has a dividend in the form of Reinhold Glière's *Romance for Violin and Orchestra*, a melodious, if somewhat innocuous, effusion, but played superbly.

Kiril Kondrashin keeps a firm hand on the orchestral forces and, considering the "eminence" of the soloist, even on the whole performance. The quality of the recorded sound, while better than most USSR efforts, is still below average as we expect it in this country.

W.

Conus: Concerto in E minor. Three sides, and **Chausson: Poème, Op. 25.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 3-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-7017) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7017) \$4.67.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under VIOLIN.

CHORAL



Berlioz: Lélio; or, The Return to Life, Op. 14b. (Sung in German, French and Italian.) (Pt. II of "Symphonie Fantastique"). Joachim Kerol (tenor), Gabriel Bacquier (baritone), Orchestra and Chorus of the New Paris Symphony Association conducted by René Leibowitz, with André Charpak (narrator). 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8250) \$5.95.

It was on 9 December 1832 that Berlioz, just returned from his stay in Italy (required under the provisions of the *Prix de Rome* scholarship) was able to present this work which he pieced together from some earlier compositions too good to be abandoned, as a sequel to his *Symphonie Fantastique*. *Lélio; ou, le Rétour de la Vie* is cast in the form

of a "mélologue," a procedure he borrowed from Thomas Moore, the Irish poet; later editions, however, describe it as a "lyric monodrama." *Lélio* consists of six musical movements separated by six monologues; the musical portions may be described as follows: (1) a ballad with pianoforte accompaniment (This is Goethe's poem *Der Fischer* which Berlioz set to music in 1827); (2) a meditation for chorus and orchestra (The *Chœur des Ombres* from the prize cantata *Cléopâtre* written in 1829); (3) a scene from brigand life for chorus, single voice and orchestra (originally thought to be a *Pirate Song* written in 1828); (4) A song of happiness for single voice with orchestral accompaniment at beginning and end and in the middle the right hand of a harp accompanying the air (the *Chant de Bonheur* originally in the *Orpheus* cantata dating from 1827); (5) the last sighs of the harp for orchestra alone (*La Harpe éolienne—souvenirs*); and (6) the overture to *The Tempest* for chorus, orchestra and piano for four hands (*Fantaisie sur la' Tempête' de Shakespeare* written in 1830).

This magnificent music is joined together by the six monologues that range over such subjects as "the delights of a life of freedom; the evanescence of happiness, the magical effects of the sounds of Nature, the genius of Shakespeare and the sins of critics who damn or rearrange masterpieces." (Barzun).

In the limited space at one's disposal in these columns it is impossible to do justice to the extraordinary conception that was Berlioz'. The performance under René Leibowitz is a convincing one. Joachim Kerol, the tenor soloist, while not the possessor of a great voice, sings his two solos with real feeling and genuine musicianship. The chorus, especially in the *Tempest* section, is superb. The recording is good and the texts are supplied.

Because this disc contains some of the most unique music ever written, it must be borne in mind that Berlioz' creation must be approached in complete sympathy and understanding before it will reveal its many beauties and its unique character. The record is certainly a must for all Berliozians, for those who own the *Symphonie Fantastique* and, as Berlioz himself wrote, in another connection, "for all who have . . . a heart and blood in their veins."

W.

Dubois: The Seven Last Words of Christ. (Sung in Latin). Margo Stagliano (soprano); Carl Nelson (tenor); Mac Morgan (baritone); the Boston Chorale conducted by Willis Paige, with Reginlad Foort, playing the organ at Symphony Hall (Boston). 1-12" disc (*SOT-1094) \$5.95.

This is a long awaited first LP recording of François Dubois' cantata *The Seven Last Words of Christ*. Long a popular favorite with church choirs over the country, this corner looked forward with considerable interest to the performance and the

recording.

It was with a feeling of growing disappointment, however, that one listened to the performance. The first fact that became apparent was that this production is a singularly undramatic one. Neither soloists nor conductor Paige give any sense of immediacy to the work; nor is there any real conviction on the part of the chorus. Now, Dubois' cantata can not survive such cavalier treatment for, despite its wide popularity, it is not great music; consequently more importance than usual is attached to the interpretive qualities evinced in a given performance.

The soloists have excellent voices. Miss Stagliano exhibits a clear, lyric soprano that falls pleasingly on the ear. Mac Morgan, the baritone, is also a sure vocalist, as is Carl Nelson. None, however, sing with any degree of expression, the chief offender being, perhaps, Morgan, to whom falls one of the plums of the score, *Deus meus* (*God, my Father*) which he sings in most commonplace fashion.

Considerable mention is made on the jacket about both performance and recording—there are notes as low as 16 cycles per second, and so far as the performance is concerned, everything was supposed to have "clicked" in exemplary fashion. Well, certainly the bass portion of the disc is very well done, but the high end left a lot to be desired. This reviewer played the disc on reasonably "hi-fi" equipment (GE pick-up with diamond stylus; Brociner front end; Williamson-type power amplifier; Bozak speakers) and there was an edginess about the voices that was unpleasant.

Taken by and large the disc was both a musical and a technical disappointment; and the fact that it is sung in Latin does not help matters any. W.

English Medieval Carols and Christmas Music.

The Primavera Singers of the Pro Musica Antiqua of New York directed by Noah Greenberg. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-521) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Nowell sing we; Ave Maria; Gloria and Alleluia; Lullay lullow; What tidings bringest thou, messenger?; Marvel not, Joseph, on Mary mild; Alma redemptoris Mater; Make we joy now in this fest; Nowell, Nowell, tidings true; Sancta Maria; Hail, Mary, full of grace; Ave Rex angelorum; Tibi laus, tibi gloria; Beata progenies; Nova, nova.

Morley: Madrigals. The Primavera Singers of the Pro Musica Antiqua directed by Noah Greenberg, with Blanche Winogron (virginals). 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-520) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Sing we and chant it; Cease, mine eyes; Now is the month of maying; Barafostus' dreame (virginals); Miraculous love's wounding; Now is the gentle season freshly flowering; Galiarda (virginals); I go before, my darling; Lady, those cherries plenty; Phyllis, I fain would die now; My bonny lass she smileth; Lo, she flies when I woo her; Irishe dumpe (virginals); Leave this tormenting and strange anguish; Goe from my window (virginals);

Clorinda false, adieu, thy love torments me; Can shee (virginals); Fire! fire! my heart!

With new LP records being released fast and furiously, it is likely that these two discs, issued with little fanfare, might be overlooked in the general hoopla. So, at the very outset it must be mentioned that anyone interested in old music will find them a must, while those who have not yet made the acquaintance of the Elizabethan madrigal nor Renaissance music are urged to investigate.

The first record, devoted to English Medieval Carols and Christmas music is a perfectly delightful experience. There are some fifteen selections recorded, the majority of which can be ascribed to no known composer; Dunstable and his contemporary, Lionel Power, are the only two exceptions. The notes emphasize the fact that these polyphonic carols are not primitive efforts to harmonize old folk melodies but are "fully developed examples of a fine contrapuntal technique written at a time when England was among the musical leaders of the world." It can be further noted that they are as characteristic of England's musical genius as the much better known Elizabethan madrigals.

It is the Elizabethan madrigal, as exemplified in the work of the great Thomas Morley (1557-1603), that occupies the second record. There are some fourteen madrigals recorded here, including the famous *Fire! fire! my heart!*; *Sing we and chant it*; and *Now is the month of maying*. These and the other madrigals are interspersed with interludes on the virginals, making the disc a real concert of 16th century music. Listening to these madrigals, one can almost experience the intensity of the period, can almost feel, as Charles Morgan wrote, "the Elizabethan's terror of youth's departure and to participate in that exquisite insanity of passion that gave . . . their lyrics (such) a charged melancholy."

These two records are the work of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua, an ensemble specializing in music of this era. It is perfectly done, the spirit, style and over-all atmosphere leave nothing to be desired. In addition there are adequate notes, texts and superior recording—all of which make them particularly desirable additions to a well-rounded record library.



OPERA

Orff: Carmina Burana (Pt. I of "Trionf"). (Sung in Latin and in Medieval German). Elfride Trötschel (soprano); Paul Kuen (tenor); Hans Braun, Karl Hoppe (baritones); Bavarian Radio Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Eugen Jochum. 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9706) \$5.85.

The music, if not the name, of Carl Orff (1895-) will, in all likelihood, be new to most American phonophiles. He has been described, by Henry Pleasants, as one of "the most radical and

... reactionary of contemporary composers." Orff's sources are, however, not those of the twelve-tonists or anything remotely resembling them; rather he goes back to musical antiquity, to Gregorian Chant, to Greek and even Oriental music. It is not, however, "an effort at imitation, but rather a search for the essential elements of music."

Carmina Burana is the first part of the triptych "Trionfi" and was first produced at Frankfurt in 1937. It consists of three sections: *In Springtime*; *In the Tavern* and *The Court of Love*. There is a sort of prologue, *Fortune, Empress of the World* which is also used as a reprise. The other parts of the triptych, *Catulli Carmina* and *Trionfo di Afrodite* date from 1943 and 1951 respectively. The "book" of twenty-five poems for *Carmina Burana* was selected from a remarkable collection of 13th century poetry found in 1803 at the Bavarian monestary, Benedictbeuren. The poems were written by a group of anonymous minstrels, goliards, errant students and defrocked monks, a motley, anti-social crew, who apparently had little respect for honor or possessions, but were devoted to play, women, wine, quarreling and fighting.

The musical settings for these twenty-five lyrics constitute some of the most remarkable modern music this reviewer has ever heard. The music of *Carmina Burana* shows the influence, primarily of "Gregorian Chant and the songs of troubadours and minnesingers." The orchestration is extremely interesting with its varied syncopations and old fashioned intervals and somewhat bizarre effects as, for example, the wonderful dance movement that has a section scored for flute and tympani. The work is melodious throughout and interest never flags—on the contrary this writer found it fascinating.

The Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Chorus and soloists under Eugen Jochum give what may be considered a definitive performance. The soloists include Elfride Trötschel, who sings in an incredibly beautiful fashion, particularly in the amazing *Dulcissime*; baritones Braun and Hoppe who do well, indeed; and a strange tenor (whom one suspects of singing, deliberately, in a weird falsetto) who sounds like an alto. The chorus bears the brunt of the work and is a beautifully trained organization that sings expressively and with rare precision.

The recording has been deftly accomplished and, while not screamingly high fidelity, is very successful. English texts are furnished as well as an all too brief note on Orff and his work. W.

Massenet: Werther (complete). (Sung in French).

Agnes Leger (soprano); Suzanni Juyol (mezzo-soprano); Charles Richard (tenor); Roger Bourdin (baritone); Chorus and Orchestra of the Theatre National de l'Opera-Comique de Paris conducted by George Sebastian. 3-12" discs in album (*UR-URLP-233) \$18.50.

A prized possession of many record collectors (the

writer included) for a number of years was the French Columbia complete recording of Massenet's *Werther*. The cast included Ninon Vallin (an incomparable Charlotte) and Georges Thill in the title role. In anticipation of this new LP release, the old set was dusted off and the high spots (duet end of act one, the aria *Pourquoi me revielle* and the last act among other portions) were played. It still was superb interpretively but sounded a little thin in tonal quality.

It came, then, as an unpleasant surprise to discover that Urania's new recording was, artistically speaking, very inferior. That it would be less successful from a vocal standpoint is understandable but what one did not expect was the routine, almost offhand, performance achieved by Sebastian and his cast. Admittedly Massenet's score is not great music; admitted, too, is its dependence on top flight singers; but it is difficult to realize it could sound so false, so scented, so lacking in any semblance of reality. Werther's agonizing is scarcely bearable in this performance and Charlotte's "prissiness" is equally disturbing.

Charles Richard in the title role is weak—he is unable to realize any part of the character except the pathological self-pity of the (save the mark!) hero. Vocally he is wooden with a tendency to force his upper register. Suzanni Juyol is an unconvincing Charlotte. Her voice is rather hard and a bit oversophisticated for the little country girl she is supposed to portray. Agnes Leger is a light soprano, inclined to be a bit shrill and is, at times, far too "cute" as Sophie. Others in the cast are adequate but uninspired.

George Sebastian does little to help matters. His direction is pedestrian, and he makes nothing of the orchestral portions of the score which contain some real "purple patches" after the manner of Berlioz. Good recording, a complete libretto and some notes on the artists only serve to accentuate the set's musical and artistic failings.

W.

Schubert: Der häusliche Krieg (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Akademie Kammerchor and Pro Musica Symphony (Vienna) conducted by Ferdinand Grossman. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8160) \$5.95.

Here is a musical and phonographic rarity—an opera by Franz Schubert. It has always seemed strange, at least superficially, that Schubert, the composer of many dramatic songs, was never successful in the operatic field. *Der häusliche Krieg* (originally *Die Verschworenen*) is one of eighteen operas he wrote and was completed in 1825. The libretto is a hash made up from two comedies of Aristophenes', one of which is the famous *Lysistrata*, the author of the outrage being Ignaz Franz Castelli. Time, places and characters have been shuffled about in a manner that defies description; for example Lystritata becomes a German baron's wife!

The music for all this, fortunately, has not been

tainted by the foolishness of the book and is pure, lyrical Schubert: curiously undramatic but delicate and lovely. The cast of singers is in no way exceptional, the best being Elisabeth Roon. Ferdinand Grossmann keeps his forces under control and moves the score along in musical fashion.

One comes away from the record with the sort of feeling that was expressed by Mozart so poignantly when he said, on being paid for some dances he wrote, "Too much for what I did, too little for what I could do." The complete absence of information about the edition used in the recording (the notes do mention the existence of four versions) plus the omission of the text make the disc worth something less than the asking price. With adequate information it could be a highly enjoyable and informative musical experience. Vox's recording is good. Truly this release is almost as much a mixture of good and bad as is the opera itself. W.

Charpentier: Louise (abridged). (Sung in French). Ninon Vallin, Christiane Gaudel (sopranos); A. Lecouvreur (mezzo-soprano); Georges Thill (tenor); André Perner (baritone); Raugel Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Eugene Bigot. 2-12" disc in album (*C-EL-7) \$7.57. (TNR May '36).

Verdi: Falstaff (complete). (Sung in Italian). Pia Tassinari, Ines Alfani Tellini, Aurora Buades (sopranos); Rita Monticone (mezzo-soprano); Robert d'Alessio, Giuseppe Nessi, Emilio Venturini (tenors); Giacomo Rimini, Emilio Ghirardini (baritones); Salvatore Baccaloni (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala (Milan) conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 2-12" discs in album (*C-EL-8) \$7.57. (TNR Nov. '36).

Massenet: Manon (complete). (Sung in French). Germaine Féraldy (soprano); Joseph Rogatchewsky (tenor); Louis Guénot (bass); Soloists, Chorus of the Opéra-Comique (Paris) and Symphony Orchestra conducted by Elie Cohen. 3-12" discs in album (*C-EL-6) \$10.55.

Columbia issues this month, in a somewhat off-hand manner, three operas from its old operatic series: *Louise* (in an abridged version made by the obliging composer), *Manon* and *Falstaff*. The off-handedness consists in Columbia's neglect to identify the singers with their roles and the complete absence of any explanatory note concerning the music. Now, at these low prices one should not expect too much; but, while it is admittedly an old-fashioned idea, this reviewer was brought up on the principle that anything worth doing was worth doing well. Even at the risk of having to charge an additional fifty cents, some explanation and identification would be well worth while.

Of the three sets the *Louise* is the best from a vocal standpoint. A trio of singers comparable to Vallin, Thill and Pernet would be difficult to find today. Their singing of Charpentier's chief claim

to fame is definitive. One would be hard put to imagine a performance that captures the flavor and idiom of the work as well as this one does. It is decidedly worth owning.

Falstaff suffers from its early recording. The old discs do not sound too good in their LP dress; and, while the performance is an excellent one (Rimini as Falstaff and Tassinari as Mistress Ford are very good), it is well nigh impossible to tolerate the muddy sound in these days of so much greater fidelity.

Manon features the singing of the late Germaine Féraldy in the title role and Josef Rogatchewsky as des Grieux. The performance, like so many made in the early thirties, is really a fine one (they took pains with both performance and recording in those days) but the sound has grown very old indeed.

All these sets have libretti, nothing more. All, with the exception of *Louise*, will be of interest primarily to antiquarians or bargain hunters, despite their artistic excellence. Anyway, there is a passable *Falstaff* (on Cetra) and a pretty good *Manon* (London) and, one strongly suspects, a new *Louise* will be in the offing soon. W.

Stravinsky: The Rake's Progress (complete). (Sung in English). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association conducted by Igor Stravinsky. 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-125) \$17.85.

THE CAST

Anne Trulove	.....	Hilde Gueden (s)
Baba the Turk	.....	Blanche Thebom (c)
Tom Rakewell	.....	Eugene Conley (t)
Nick Shadow	.....	Mack Harrell (bt)
Mother Goose	.....	Martha Lipton (ms)
Trulove	.....	Norman Scott (bs)
Sellem, Auctioneer	.....	Paul Franke (t)
Keeper of the Madhouse	....	Lawrence Davidson (bs)

In view of the fact that *The Rake's Progress* has been performed more than two hundred times since its première in Venice on 11 September 1951, the leading critics on both sides of the Atlantic have had ample opportunity to appraise this work; most of them have written at length about this controversial new opera. The trend of the criticism that we have read seems to be that *The Rake's Progress* is "old hat" and not very good "old hat" at that. It is thought that Stravinsky looked back to Handel and Mozart without fully grasping the technique of these early operatic composers and has produced a very uneven score, some of which is almost unsingable. Robert Craft, who has supplied the copious notes that accompany this recording, is doubtless aware of this unfavorable criticism and has attempted to answer it in the section of his notes marked "An Appreciation of the Music." Whether he has answered it satisfactorily each music lover must decide for himself.

In a foreword to the notes, Stravinsky indicates that he is satisfied to rest the case with this recording, for he writes: "The chief value of a recording to the composer is in the fact that it is a 'record,' a document of his wishes respecting his own music."

No pains have been spared to make this recording as fine as possible both musically and technically; we doubt very much whether a better performance of this work has been given than the one that has been recorded on these LP discs. Here is *The Rake's Progress* with its best foot forward; its popularity among record collectors is in your hands.

Verdi and Mozart Arias. Ezio Pinza (bass) with RCA Victor Orchestra. 4-7" discs in box (6V-WDM-1751) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1751) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Don Carlo*—Ella giammai m'amo (recit.), Dormiro sol nel canto mio regal (aria); *Simon Boccanegra*—A te l'estremo addio (recit.), Il lacerato spirto (aria); *Ernani*—Che mai vegg'io! (recit.), Infelice! e tu credevi (aria); *Nabucco*—Vieni, o Levita! (recit.), Tu sul labbro dei veggimenti (aria); *I Vespri Siciliani*—O patria (recit.), O tu, Palermo (aria); *Don Giovanni*—Madamina, il catalogo; *Don Giovanni*—Deh, vieni alla finestra; *Don Giovanni*—Finch' han dal vino; *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Non piu andrai; *Le Nozze di Figaro*—Se vuol ballare; *Die Zauberflöte*—Possenti Numi; *Die Zauberflöte*—Qui sdegno non s'accende.

Ezio Pinza returns to the RCA Victor label with an impressive collection of Verdi and Mozart arias that serve to demonstrate the qualities that have made him one of the most popular artists ever to sing in this country. These arias are all well sung, by any standards, and Mr. Pinza's voice has withstood the ravages of time and *South Pacific* very well indeed.

This reviewer had considerable curiosity concerning the *Don Carlo* and *Vespri Siciliani* for they were among the first selections Pinza recorded in this country and they were released back in the dear dim days of 1926. Still having the discs, the writer did what might have been an ungenerous thing—he played it right after the current LP and, while almost thirty years have elapsed, Pinza still has an amazing amount of voice left and, what's more, he is much more of a "smoothie" than in the old days.

The actual style of singing hasn't changed, although some of the tempi are faster. Whether this is due to our generally increased speed of living or, as is sometimes the case, they were quickened to make for easier singing is difficult to say. In all events, the Verdi arias emerge as well-considered, slightly understated but exquisitely sung performances. Most successful are the *Simon Boccanegra* and *Nabucco* excerpts although the *Ernani* and *Vespri Siciliani* pieces have lost none of their charm.

The Mozart numbers are also highly successful, a sparkling *Madamina*, an almost crooned *Serenata*

(very effective, this) and a rousing *Finch' han dal vino* lead the parade. The *Nozze di Figaro* excerpts are a bit on the heavy side and lacking in humor. The two arias from *Zauberflöte* are good but not especially distinguished. Orchestral support for the Verdi is superbly handled by Erich Leinsdorf while the Mozart accompaniments are in the expert hands of Alfred Wallenstein.

This is one of the best discs yet issued of Ezio Pinza's art and should receive a warm welcome from his legion of admirers.

W.

Celebrated Tenor Arias. Richard Tucker (tenor) with the Orchestra of the Metropolitan Opera Association. 1-12" disc (C-ML-4750) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *La Traviata*—De' miei bollenti spiriti; *Andrea Chenier*—Come un bel di di maggio; *L'Africana*—O Paradiso; *Faust*—Salut! demeure; *L'Elisir d'Amore*—Una furtiva lagrima; *La Bohème*—Che gelida manina; *Carmen*—Air de fleur; *La Gioconda*—Ceilo e mar; *Un Ballo in Maschera*—Forse la soglia attinse (recit.), Ma se m'è forza perderti (aria).

This sort of record always offers a problem to this reviewer. Obviously it is aimed at a particular market: the admirers of Richard Tucker; and since the writer can not be numbered among this group, he is hard put to be impartial or dispassionate. Thus, one can begin by saying that Tucker fans will have cause to rejoice, for the celebrated tenor is in good voice and is well recorded.

Musically the nine arias are all of a piece. There is no difference between his singing of *Salut! demeure, chaste et pure* and the very different *Air de fleur*. A complete lack of understanding of the situation or an inability to project the feeling of the words characterizes most, if not all, of the performances recorded here—which, incidentally, is the reason this reviewer can not be numbered among Mr. Tucker's admirers. As a case in point, listen to the sobbing and gulping in the exquisite *Una furtiva lagrima*. It is sung in the opera by Nemorino, who has chanced to see a tear on the cheek of Adina, his sweetheart who, for operatic reasons, has been very cool towards him until she learns he is going to join the army. Now, the tear is Adina's, not Nemorino's, but what happens? Tucker sings the aria as if the tear were his own, with sundry gulplings and goings on. It is difficult to understand why either Mr. Tucker or the conductor was not able to get it straight. It can only be assumed that here, as has been the case all too frequently before, no one was interested. Incidentally, neither Fausto Cleva nor Emil Cooper provide other than routine orchestral support.

Which brings us back to the beginning—this is a record for those partial to Richard Tucker. Others are advised to look elsewhere for good performances of these popular, but none the less great, operatic arias.

W.

Puccini: Manon Lescaut (complete). (Sung in Italian). Clara Petrella (soprano); Vasco Campagnano, Tullio Pane, Tommaso Soley (tenors); Ortensia Beggiato (mezzo-soprano); Saturno Meletti (baritone); Pier Luigi Latinucci, Mario Ansaldi, Piero Poldi (bases); Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Italiana conducted by Federico del Cupolo. 3-12" discs in album (*CE-C-1243) \$17.85.

This is the second LP version of Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, although it is the first actually to be made for LP. The earlier version, a dubbing from older 78's, was issued by Columbia and noted in a previous issue of THE NEW RECORDS (August 1951).

Naturally, this newer recording takes precedence over the earlier one from a technical angle. Vocally it is certainly the equal and, in some instances, superior to the older set. In the title role Clara Petrella gives a fine performance. Her well-placed lyric soprano is equal to all occasions, and she also demonstrates her extra-musical abilities by showing considerable insight into the character of the unhappy *Manon*. As her lover, the Chevalier des Grieux, Vasco Campagnano proves to be a better than average tenor who, even in the impassioned *Guardate, pazzo son, guardate!* does not lose sight of the fact that he is a singer first and an actor second—in short, he does notgulp and indulge in foolish histrionics. As *Manon's* brother, Saturno Meletti gives a good account of both the role and himself, while others in the long cast are usually more than adequate.

Federico del Cupolo's direction, while not as fervent as Molajoli's in the early Columbia set, is, none the less, a very sound job; and the performance gains by his allowing Puccini's fresh and youthful score to speak, as it were, for itself.

This is the first operatic set issued by Cetra under the aegis of Capitol records. It is a very good beginning, and one is glad to note that the policy of supplying an excellent libretto along with notes and pictures has been retained.

W.

VOCAL

Songs of Duparc. Gérard Souzay (baritone) accompanied by Jacqueline Bonneau (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-813) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Le Manoir de Rosemonde; La Vague et la Cloche; L'Invitation au Voyage; Sérénade Florentine; La Vie Antérieure; Chanson Triste; Testament; Lamento; Phidylé; Soupir; Extase; Elégie.*

Henri Duparc (1845-1933), whose career was cut short at the age of thirty-seven by a nervous illness, left only fourteen songs, twelve of which are recorded here. Although he lived until 1933, the last forty-eight years of his life were non-productive,

being spent in the country as a semi-invalid. As the annotator of the jacket notes very aptly points out, "... few composers have achieved immortality with so slender an output." In addition to the fourteen songs, however, Duparc wrote an orchestral nocturne, a symphonic poem and a three-part motet, none of which, however, are very well known. Thus admirers of Duparc's art will welcome this recording that contains virtually his whole output. Of the two songs omitted, one is for female voice (*Au pays où se fait la guerre*) and the other, *Le Galop* was suppressed by Duparc and only published after his death.

The earliest of the twelve recorded here are the famous *Chanson Triste* and *Soupir*; both date from 1868. The last, in point of composition, is the equally well known *La Vie Antérieure* (1884). All Duparc's *chansons* are notable for their typical French lyricism and for the extreme criticism to which he subjected them. One is reminded of another French artist, Flaubert, who is said to have spent days polishing a sentence or phrase. Some of Duparc's music also bears the stamp of Franck's overweening musical personality in their elaboration for its own sake. "... broken chords and tremulandos fill in spaces that had better been left empty . . . (and) the works take on a grandiose, quasi-orchestral air."

Souzay, of course, sings the songs in a manner that calls for the highest praise. Both vocally and interpretively it would be difficult to conceive of better performances. Jacqueline Bonneau proves, as usual, a superb accompanist. Good recording, excellent notes are supplied but no texts, the latter a serious omission, particularly in this instance where the words are of the utmost importance.

W.

Jenkins: Seven Dreams. Bill Lee, supporting cast, the Ralph Brewster Singers and orchestra conducted by Gordon Jenkins. 1-12" disc (*D-DDL-9011) \$5.85.

Decca says: "Here is a unique and startling achievement . . . a complete seven-part show written and produced wholly for records . . . it is entertainment of the highest Broadway calibre conceived especially for home enjoyment."

Gordon Jenkins, whose "Manhattan Tower" was quite a sensation when it was released a few years ago, has conceived a much more ambitious production this time. "Seven Dreams," with dialogue, lyrics and music all by Mr. Jenkins, consists of seven varied fanciful episodes, some whimsical, some humorous, and one or two with a sentimental pull at the heartstrings. Quite an able cast of actors and vocalists, headed by Bill Lee as The Dreamer, bring each of these episodes to life. Despite the high ability of the cast, this could be a pretty dull affair if it were not for the wide variety of the sketches and the spontaneity of each of them.

We don't wish to infer that Mr. Jenkins has created a great dramatic or musical masterpiece, but he has produced a recording for home entertainment

that should have a wide appeal, especially among those who like original musical sketches and playlets on the radio and television. R.

Jussi Bjoerling in Song. Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) accompanied by Frederick Schauwecker (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1771) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1771) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Die Forelle*, Op. 32; *Die Allmacht*, Op. 79, No. 2; *Ständchen* (No. 4 of "Schwanengesang"); *Wanderers Nachtlied* No. II, Op. 96, No. 3; *Die böse Farbe* (No. 17 of "Die schöne Müllerin") (Schubert). *Die Mainacht*, Op. 43, No. 2 (Brahms). *Es muss ein Wunderbares sein* (Liszt). *Verborgenheit* (Wolf). *A Swan*, Op. 25, No. 2; *A Dream*, Op. 48, No. 6 (Grieg). *Ständchen*, Op. 17, No. 2; *Morgen*, Op. 27, No. 4 (R. Strauss). *Svarta Rosor*, Op. 36, No. 1 (Sibelius). *Tonerna* (Sjöberg). *Lilacs*, Op. 21, No. 5 (Rachmaninoff). *Ideale* (Tosti).

A Song Recital. Kirsten Flagstad (soprano) accompanied by Edwin McArthur (piano). 4-7" discs in box (øV-WDM-1738) \$5.14. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1728) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42 (Schumann). *An die Musik*, Op. 88, No. 4; *Ganymed* (Schubert). *Von ewiger Liebe*, Op. 43, No. 1; *O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück*, Op. 63, No. 8 (Brahms). *Ich liebe Dich*, Op. 37, No. 1; *Ruhe, meine Seele*, Op. 27, No. 1 (R. Strauss). *At Parting* (Rogers). *Morning* (Speaks). *We Have Turned Again Home* (McArthur). *When I Have Sung My Songs* (Charles).

Two of the better-known Scandinavian operatic artists undertake to issue *Lieder* recitals this month, with mixed results.

Jussi Bjoerling is very definitely out of his element. His recital begins with a positively grotesque performance of Schubert's *Die Forelle* that is taken at top speed, the sooner to get it over with, presumably. Other Schubert songs, while they do not suffer the fate of the poor trout, are not well sung. The magnificent *Die Allmacht* is plainly monotonous on this record, which it is not when it is sung by an understanding artist. Bjoerling's weaknesses as an operatic tenor (i.e., a lack of color and an inability to convey expression vocally) are intensified on this disc. Curiously, when he treats a song operatically, as he does Sibelius' *Svarta Rosor* the result is more exciting but it still is not good *Lieder* singing. This is definitely a record for admirers of the Swedish tenor, not for devotees of the *Lied*.

Mme. Flagstad, on the other record, works her way through Schumann, Schubert, Brahms, Strauss and a group of Americans in a vocally impeccable fashion. Of her glorious voice it is unnecessary to speak; of her manner of singing *Lieder* it need only be noted that she is able to divorce herself from the operatic manner, to the greater success of the songs. The Schumann cycle is beautifully sung and

the two Schubert *Lieder* are handled gracefully. Brahms and Strauss are temperamentally more suited to Mme. Flagstad and they are sung with warmth and understanding. As for the songs of Rogers, Speaks and company—well, they are always sung at recitals, and so they are included here. One wishes the space had been devoted to other material.

Both discs are well recorded. The Flagstad disc has a jacket full of completely irrelevant notes about the artist, not a word about the music. Fie on RCA Victor for such lack of consideration for the purchaser—or maybe only Flagstad admirers are supposed to buy the record, in which case is one to assume the music is of no importance? W.

Great Arias from Bach Cantatas (Pt. I). Hildegarde Rossl-Majdan (alto) with orchestra. One side, and **Great Arias from Bach Cantatas** (Pt. II). Hugues Cuenod (tenor) with orchestra. 1-12" disc (*BG-BG-526) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: (Pt. I) *Easter Oratorio*—Saget, saget mir geschwinde; *Cantata* No. 63—O sel'ger Tag!; *Cantata* No. 133—Getrost es fasst ein heil'ger Leib; *Cantata* No. 161—Der schluss ist schön gemacht . . . Komm, du susse Todesstunde. (Pt. II) *Cantata* No. 21—Wie hast du dich, mein Gott . . . Bäche von gesalznen Zahren; *Cantata* No. 46—So klage du, zerstörte Gottesstadt; *Cantata* No. 21—Erfreue dich, Seele; *Cantata* No. 104—Der höchste Hüter . . . Verbirgt mein Hirte sich zu lange.

The Bach Guild has selected a group of arias for both alto and tenor voices from its complete recordings of these Bach cantatas and placed them on the present LP disc. In addition to Bach enthusiasts, this record should of particular interest to soloists who are studying these great works.

PIANO



Liszt: Hungarian Rhapsodies. Edith Farnadi (piano). 2-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-213) \$11.90.

Liszt: (8) Hungarian Rhapsodies (Vol. I). Edith Farnadi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5230) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Hungarian Rhapsodies No. 1 in E, No. 2 in C-sharp minor, No. 3 in B-flat, No. 4 in E-flat, No. 5 in E minor, No. 6 in D-flat, No. 7 in D minor, No. 8 in F-sharp minor ("Capriccio").

Liszt: (7) Hungarian Rhapsodies (Vol. II). Edith Farnadi (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5231) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Hungarian Rhapsodies No. 9 in E-flat ("Carnival de Pest"), No. 10 in E ("Preliudio"), No. 11 in A minor, No. 12 in C-sharp minor, No. 13 in A minor, No. 14 in F minor ("Mohac's Field"), No. 15 ("Rákóczy March").

Here we have the first fifteen of the famous Liszt

Hungarian Rhapsodies played with just the proper spirit by the Hungarian pianist, Edith Farnadi. It is true that Liszt wrote twenty of these engaging pieces but only the first fifteen, which were composed between 1851 and 1854, are included in most editions of the famous pianist's works. The 16th through the 19th are of interest only to students of the composer's style in his last years, and the 20th remains unpublished. If you are interested, but feel that fifteen would be too much of a good thing, these discs may be purchased separately as indicated above.

Chopin: Waltzes (complete). Ania Dorfmann (piano). 4-7" discs in box (*V-WBC-1050) \$2.98. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1050) \$2.98.

Chopin: (24) Preludes, Op. 28. Friedrich Gulda (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-755) \$5.95.

RCA Victor offers a fine bargain in its recording of the Chopin Waltzes by Ania Dorfmann under its modestly priced "Bluebird Classics" label. London offers American music lovers the opportunity of comparing the recording of the Chopin Preludes, Op. 28 by the brilliant young pianist, Friedrich Gulda, with the many recorded versions now available by such big name artists as Arrau, Brailowsky, Noväes, and Rubinstein.

VIOLIN



Chausson: Poème, Op. 25. Three sides, and **Conus: Concerto in E minor.** Jascha Heifetz (violin) with the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Izler Solomon. 3-7" discs in box (*V-WDM-7017) \$3.99. 1-10" disc (*V-LM-7017) \$4.67.

Chausson: Poème, Op. 25. One side, and **Ravel: Tzigane.** Christian Ferras (violin) with l'Orchestre National de Belgique conducted by Georges Sebastian. And **Honegger: Sonata for Violin Solo.** Christian Ferras (violin). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-762) \$5.95.

There are numerous LP recordings of Chausson's famous *Poème*, Op. 25 and certainly Heifetz's version rates with the best. Of particular interest to us was the splendid recording of the seldom heard Conus Concerto which occupies the reverse side of the Heifetz disc . . . Jules Edwardovich Conus (usually spelled Konius) was the least famous of three brothers (Gregory, Jules and Lev) who were quite important in the musical life of Russia during the last quarter of the 19th century and the first quarter of the present century. Jules was a successful violin virtuoso and wrote much music of merit for his instrument. By far the most important work is the present concerto, which seemingly appealed to Mr. Heifetz, because he has given several performances of it and has chosen to record it. It will doubtless be entirely new to most Americans. We found it quite delightful and do not hesitate to recommend it to those music lovers who are inter-

ested in adding to their libraries recordings of unusual and worthwhile items.



DICTION

This I Believe. The Personal Philosophies of 10 Living Americans and 10 Immortals, with commentary by Edward R. Murrow. 2-12" discs in folder (*C-SSL-192) \$11.90.

CONTENTS: The voices of Bernard Baruch, Helen Hayes, Ralph Bunche, Charles H. Percy, Mrs. Marty Mann, Eleanor Roosevelt, Louis B. Seltzer, Helen Keller, Will Durant and Carl Sandburg. The philosophies of the following (with portraying actor's name in parentheses): Socrates (Barry Jones), Abraham Lincoln (Raymond Massey), Florence Nightingale (Katharine Cornell), Confucius (Hu Shih), Franklin D. Roosevelt (Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.), Queen Victoria (Helen Hayes), Benjamin Franklin (José Ferrer), Will Rogers (Will Rogers, Jr.), Marie Curie (Eve Curie), Gandhi (S. Radhakrishnan).

Lack of space precludes complete discussion of this pair of LP discs, a job we would love to do. Edward R. Murrow has demonstrated, here, why he has rightfully gained fame for bringing to us the unusual—the unexpected—and doing it in a way which will capture the attention of all who hear or see him.

Mr. Murrow, with the able assistance of editors Raymond Gram Swing and Ward Wheelock, has captured for us exemplary bits of the philosophies of ten living Americans and ten "immortals." All of the immortals are well-known (even though their philosophies may not be); and most of the living Americans are, too. One might not know, however, that Charles H. Percy was elected president of Bell and Howell Co. at the age of 33, and in 1949 was voted one of the ten outstanding young men in the country by the Junior Chamber of Commerce; or that Mrs. Marty Mann, once an alcoholic herself, helped found the National Committee on Alcoholism and was the first woman member of Alcoholics, Anonymous. Louis B. Seltzer is the editor of the Cleveland Press (Scripps-Howard) and in 1951 he received the award of the National Conference of Christians and Jews for his 30 years spent in promoting better relations among all races and religions.

The title of this set derives from the name of Mr. Murrow's radio program, *This I Believe*, now broadcast 2400 times a week and heard by 39 million people the world over; the program brings persons from every walk of life to the microphone to tell, in less than 600 words, their personal philosophies of life—the beliefs on which they lean to see them through crises or those that teach them how to conduct themselves when they are triumphant. Following the success of the radio show, in 1952 Mr. Murrow selected 100 scripts from the program and

put them in a book, also entitled *This I Believe* (Simon & Schuster, New York); it became a best seller (non-fiction) second only to the Bible.

More than the printed page, the voice of the philosopher transmits that certain something to his words which instills confidence in the hearer; and because of this, we have nothing but praise for these records. They are thought-provoking; one need not agree with the beliefs expressed to derive benefit from them. This is one of the very few non-dramatic recordings which one would like to play over and over again. J.

Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet (complete). The Old Vic Company. 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6110) \$17.16.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Paris	.....	John Warner
Romeo	.....	Alan Badel
Mercutio	.....	Peter Finch
Benvolio	.....	William Squire
Tybalt	.....	Laurence Payne
Friar Laurence	.....	Lewis Casson
Peter	.....	Newton Blick
Juliet	.....	Claire Bloom
Nurse	.....	Athene Seyler

Fast upon the heels of the fine recording of *Macbeth* by the Old Vic Company (*V-LM-6010) comes this splendid reading of *Romeo and Juliet*. Certainly young students of Shakespeare today have a great advantage. In our student days the printed page was cold and colorless; our professor had to use all of his ingenuity to arouse our interest. Today things are different; such recordings as those by the Old Vic Company bring these masterpieces to life. The characters spring from the text and become real living persons, and the great joy of it all is that we may command them to perform whenever we are in the mood to hear them.

Eliot: Murder in the Cathedral. Old Vic Company. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35043/4) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in deluxe factory-sealed album (*ANG-3505B) \$11.90.

T. S. Eliot's first complete play *Murder in the Cathedral* was commissioned to open the festival in Canterbury Cathedral in 1935. Since that time it has had many productions; one of the most famous was Robert Helpmann's production by the Old Vic Company with Robert Donat in the role of Archbishop Thomas Becket. It is this superb version that has been recorded and is now being made available in this country under the Angel label.

Ever since Robert Speaight made a recording of the Sermon on Christmas Morning from this play, shortly after its first production, there has been an insistent demand for a complete recording. We are happy to say that the present recorded version is a thoroughly adequate one and should meet the pent-up demand most satisfactorily.

We must, however, warn those who are not familiar with *Murder in the Cathedral* and know Mr. Eliot only through his recent most successful play *The Cocktail Party*, that they are very different; and because you were thrilled with the latter is no indication that you would be at all interested in the former. *Murder in the Cathedral* is a purely religious play and was designed to be given in the chancel of a church; in fact it has been given in varicus churches both here and in England.

In view of the fact there is practically no action in *Murder in the Cathedral* it is an ideal play to present on records. Little is lost in not seeing the characters; Eliot's inspired text needs no costumes, scenery or lighting effects; it is well able to stand alone if it is well read as it is by the fine cast that has made the present recorded version. R.

ORGAN

Organ Music by Modern Composers. Richard Ellsasser, playing the organ of the John Hays Hammond, Jr., Museum, Gloucester (Mass.). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3064) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: *En Bateau* (Bartók); *Prelude and Fugue on a Theme* by Vittoria (Britten); *Processional* (Cowell); *Episode* (Copland); *Sonata No. 2* (Hindemith); *Le Banquet celeste* (Messiaen); *Pastorale* (Milhaud); *Pastorale on a Christmas Plain-song* (Thomson); *Chorale-Prelude on the Welsh Hymn "Hyfridol"* (Vaughan Williams).

The catalog of organ music is being rapidly enlarged through the efforts of MGM, and they are presenting music previously unrecorded. Most of the organ works which Ellsasser records are the type heard on recital programs today. The disc at hand, one of a projected series, contains several works frequently programmed by the leading organists. All in all this a very worthy collection. The Hindemith Sonata is getting to be rather popular with organists, although audiences are not yet placing it on their hit list. It is a well-written piece of music, but you have to be a musician to derive much pleasure from it. Britten's work and Cowell's *Processional* complete one side of the disc. The second side we found much more interesting. Bartók's *En Bateau* is a humorous work depicting the seasickness he suffered on an ocean voyage. Copland's *Episode* and Milhaud's *Pastorale*, as well as Virgil Thomson's *Pastorale* are from the H. W. Gray Contemporary Organ Series, and they are fine short works of real substance. Milhaud's piece preserves the identity of the composer—it is in his style just as his orchestral works are all stamped with his hallmark.

Olivier Messiaen's *Le Banquet celeste* is a favorite work with organists who play this modern master's music. Messiaen is one of the most individual of modern French composers, who has written mostly for organ, although his *L'Ascension* has been re-

corded by Stokowski, and is a fine orchestral work. Messiaen is a mystic, and his music usually bears titles from the liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church or from the writings of the saints. The title of the work recorded here refers to "the celestial banquet of the Holy Communion." Ellsasser's performances are all laudable, and MGM has captured the range of this great organ with exceptional fidelity. A disc to be recommended to all organ enthusiasts.

S.

BAND



Christmas Carols. Deutschmeister Band conducted by Julius Herrmann. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5300) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen; Hark! The Herald Angels Sing; Good Christian Men Rejoice; It Came upon a Midnight Clear; Good King Wenceslas; O Come, All Ye Faithful; From O'er the Hills of Far Judea; The First Noël; Joy to the World; Away in a Manger; We Three Kings of Orient Are; O Little Town of Bethlehem; O Tannenbaum; Silent Night, Holy Night; Wassail, Wassail; Deck the Halls.

Here are sixteen Christmas carols, most of them thrice familiar, done in a lugubrious manner by the Deutschmeister Band, by now firmly ensconced in the roster of Westminster's artists. Personally, we prefer our carols sung; however, we hasten to state that if you think you might like to hear some played by a large brass band, Mr. Herrmann and his men should please you, for their artistry is impeccable and their taste above reproach.

CHILDREN



Barab: A Child's Garden of Verses. Russell Oberlin (counter-tenor) with instrumental accompaniment directed by Seymour Barab. 1-10" disc (*ESO-ESJ-5) \$4.

An Elizabethan Songbag for Young People. Pro Musica Antiqua directed by Noah Greenberg. 1-10" disc (*ESO-ESJ-6) \$4.

Here are two lovely records for children of superior intelligence. The first contains Stevenson's charming little poems set to music by Seymour Barab and pleasingly sung by Russell Oberlin with piano accompaniments and other accompaniments consisting of the piano plus various woodwinds. The second record contains some fifteen rounds and madrigals from the period of Elizabeth I sung by a mixed sextette unaccompanied. These vocal selections are interspersed with short pieces played on virginals and recorders.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Coloseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Degen, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyrichord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Olseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusik, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$3.95.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

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By mail to any address
\$1 per year

ALTHOUGH it is limited, there is a lively demand for recordings of bird songs. A new LP disc entitled "Bird Songs of Door-yard, Field and Forest" has recently come to our attention. It contains 135 distinctive songs and calls of 49 different species. The price is \$7.95.

These recordings were made by Jerry and Norma Stillwell, a couple who have been interested in birds since early childhood. In 1948 Mr. Stillwell retired as Chief Technical Editor for the American Petroleum Institute and the Stillwells sold their home and car, bought a truck, house trailer and the best of sound recording equipment; and since that time, traveling from state to state, they have built up one of the finest and largest collections of bird song recordings available anywhere. The present 12-inch LP disc contains a choice selection of these. A running commentary, we presume by Mrs. Stillwell, adds greatly to the interest of this highly illuminating record in the realm of nature study.

Several years ago the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University, issued an album of 78 rpm records entitled "Voices of the Night." It contained calls and songs of a great variety of frogs, toads and tree frogs. As the recordings were most successfully accomplished, this album has been in great demand among those interested in this phase of nature study. Now a revised version of this album, containing additional material, is now available on a 12-inch LP disc. It is called "Voices of the Night" (33½ rpm). The price is \$6.75.

If these records are not available from your local dealer, orders sent to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of THE NEW RECORDS. Most of

the issues published during the last twenty years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning January 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U. S. A.).



ORCHESTRA

Italian Classical Symphonists. Italian Chamber Orchestra conducted by Newell Jenkins. 6-12" discs in box (*HS-HSL-C) \$36.35.

CONTENTS:

Albinoni: Concerto for Orchestra in D minor, Op. 5, No. 7; Corelli: Concerto Grosso No. 2; Sammartini: Violin Concerto No. 2 in C; Sammartini: Symphony in G. (*HS-HSL-74) \$5.95.

Sammartini: Cantata No. 5 for Fridays in Lent (with soprano, contralto, tenor). (*HS-HSL-75) \$5.95.

Pergolesi: *Orfeo* (with tenor); Cambini: *Andromaque* (with soprano); Galuppi: Overture No. 2. (*HS-HSL-76) \$5.95.

Giordani: Piano Concerto; Valentini: Oboe Concerto; Brunetti: Symphony in C. (*HS-HSL-77) \$5.95.

Viotti: Concerto for Piano and Violin in E-flat; Brunetti: Symphony in G minor. (*HS-HSL-78) \$5.95.

Rosetti: Horn Concerto in E-flat; Boccherini: Symphony in F, Op. 35, No. 4. (*HS-HSL-79) \$5.95.

This set of six discs, devoted to the music of the Italian Classical Symphonists, is one of the greatest achievements of the phonograph to date. These records not only fill one of the biggest lacunae in the recorded repertoire, but they are so logically arranged and so expertly chosen that one is taken, as it were, on a personally conducted tour of eighteenth century musical Italy and introduced to each composer. To be sure, some other works by a few of the composers

represented have been recorded elsewhere; but it never has been possible to get the perspective that is available here.

It is manifestly impossible, unfortunately, in the limited space at one's disposal, to enter into any detailed discussion. Certain items are of paramount interest, however, such as the Sammartini *Cantata*, which is not available in any printed edition whatsoever. Sammartini was also one of the young Mozart's teachers and even proud Leopold spoke of the honor of having him as a friend. This great man's music is an ever constant source of delight, revealing new beauties on each playing. The same characteristics are evident to a greater or lesser degree in all the other music in the collection; and special mention must be made of the two Brunetti symphonies and the superb double concerto of Viotti.

As an example of the care exercised in preparing the set, the Giordani *Concerto* is a case in point. The piece was first played on a harpsichord, then on a piano; it was decided that its musical values were better suited to the latter instrument, and it was so recorded. Such care and honesty on the part of a recording company is virtually unprecedented. The concerto, by the way, is flawlessly played by Carlo Bussotti.

The various soloists, both vocal and instrumental, are all technically competent and artistically sincere—an extremely happy circumstance which demonstrates that when proper care is exercised, a group of musicians can still be found who will take pride in their work. As for Newell Jenkins, the artistic and musical director of the enterprise, one can only offer up hallelujahs for him—he has done an inestimable service for music lovers, whether they be scholars or the common garden variety. His commentaries on the jackets are models of their kind; informative, concise and honest.

Haydn Society's engineers have come up with a virtually flawless recording job—crystal clear and exquisitely proportioned sound. It might also be noted that the discs are available individually, but it is a safe bet that once a single record is purchased the buyer will not rest until he has the complete set. Haydn Society, with the release of this set and its two counterparts, the Bach *Clavierübung* and *Masterpieces of Music before 1750*, has established itself as the most intelligent and really musical producer of records the industry has ever seen. One sincerely hopes they will receive the support they deserve so they may continue to demonstrate their unique taste and artistic conscience.

W.

Sibelius: (4) Legends for Orchestra, Op. 22.

Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Thomas Jensen. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-843) \$5.95.

Less than a year ago Columbia issued the first recording of the complete *Lemminkäinen Suite*, which comprises the *Four Legends*, Op. 22 contain-

ing the well known *Swan of Tuonela*. The Columbia disc (*C-ML-4672) was played by The Philadelphia Orchestra under Ormandy and, as you can easily imagine, that is a tough one to beat in music such as this. Jensen and the Danish orchestra do not beat them, although the Danes' effort is a valiant one. The Danish State Radio Orchestra is a fine group, but the polish and unique tone of the Philadelphians lends an atmosphere to this music which makes this situation one of the nicer things about LP duplications—you can choose the better of two fine recordings. The reproduction is about even between the two discs, so there is no marked preference on that score. Interpretively, Ormandy can hold his own with Jensen, or anyone else, in this music. We preferred Ormandy's thrilling account of No. 4 *Lemminkäinen's Return*.

This suite is in four sections, played in this order: *Lemminkäinen and the Virgins from Saari* (No. 1), *The Swan of Tuonela* (No. 3), *Lemminkäinen in Tuonela* (No. 2), and *Lemminkäinen's Return* (No. 4). In order of composition, "Swan" came first; it was written in 1893 as the prelude to an opera "The Building of the Boat" based on a passage from the *Kalevala*. The opera remained unfinished, but the prelude was revised in 1896 and again in 1900. The other Legends were composed in 1895 and revised in 1896, while No. 4 was again revised in 1900. The first and second items remained in manuscript, and were discovered a few years ago among the effects of the famous Finnish conductor, Robert Kajanus; but long before that time the third and fourth had established a firm place in the concert repertoire. It is interesting to note that the order in which these are played has been suggested by Sibelius as the best, although it differs from the order shown by opus number, which we included in parentheses above.

S.

Liszt: A Symphony to Dante's "Divine Comedy" (1856). L'Orchestre de l'Association des Concerts Colonne conducted by George Sebastian. 1-12" disc (*UR-URLP-7103) \$5.95.

Liszt: A Symphony to Dante's "Divine Comedy" (1856). Vienna Philharmonia Orchestra and Vienna State Opera Chorus conducted by F. Charles Adler. 1-12" disc (*SPA-44) \$5.95.

The LP horn of plenty must necessarily result in many duplications, and so it is hardly strange that the long neglected *Dante Symphony* of Liszt now appears in its second and third recordings just two months after Decca released the initial recording by Alfred Wallenstein and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (*D-DL-9670). We had high praise for Wallenstein's performance in the November 1953 issue of TNR, at which time we also gave some information on the work. Those who acquired the Decca disc need not feel sorry for their choice. Those who are yet to acquire it will do well to compare the *Urania* and the Decca discs, particularly as to which

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

Ø indicates 45 rpm.

reproduction sounds best on their phonographs. The SPA disc can be quickly forgotten, as it is a plodding performance, seemingly lacking in drive and inspiration, played with rough edges, and generally giving the impression of falling apart at the seams. It is outclassed in every way by either of the others.

Urania's reproduction is a brilliant piece of engineering, and we mean that literally, for it has a razor-edged definition and a stentorian dynamic range. Their fortissimo effects are gigantic, yet surprisingly clear and transparent. This includes the recording of the Magnificat at the conclusion of the work, sung by the women's choir, which shows a fine balance with the orchestra as well as a good quality of tone.

Liszt wrote two endings to the symphony, one soft and ethereal, the other brilliant and triumphant. It is interesting to note that Sebastian, who gives so much more vital and dramatic a reading than Adler, uses the soft ending. In its way it is really more dramatic than the walloping orchestral passages and final Hallelujahs (sung by the chorus) which Adler uses, even though he handles this part better than anything else in his performance. Nevertheless, Sebastian is a great conductor, whose records have all maintained a good general level of excellence, and we recommend his recording. Wallenstein's performance is worth comparing if you are really interested in this work.

S.

Tchaikovsky—arr. Diaghileff: **Aurora's Wedding** (Ballet Suite) (complete). One and one-half sides, and **Tchaikovsky**—trans. Stokowski: **Humoresque, Op. 10, No. 2.** And **Tchaikovsky**—trans. Stokowski: **Solitude, Op. 73, No. 6.** Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1774) \$5.72.

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake Ballet Suite, Op. 20. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty Ballet Suite, Op. 60.** Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35006TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35006) \$5.95.

Tchaikovsky: Aurora's Wedding (Act III of "The Sleeping Beauty") (complete). One side, and **Gounod: Faust**—Ballet Music. Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, conducted by Warwick Braithwaite. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3052) \$4.85.

Tchaikovsky: Francesca da Rimini, Op. 32. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Ernest Borsamsky. One side, and **Tchaikovsky: Romeo and Juliet** (Overture-Fantasia). Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Jose Eibenschütz. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-22) \$3.50.

About the three ballet recordings in this group, one thing, at least, is clear: for most folks the Angel record is the best buy because of the couplings. It is

the only LP that offers the popular suites from the two most popular ballets by Tchaikowsky (excepting *Nutcracker*), *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*, with all their beguiling charm and melodic beauty. Von Karajan and the fine Philharmonia Orchestra extract all the loveliness from these scores in superbly phrased and gently relaxed performances which are captured in full, rich fidelity. This is a disc to be highly recommended to those who do not wish the complete versions of these works (each occupies two LP discs in the complete version).

Aurora's Wedding is described differently by every annotator, and we are not quite sure, at this point, just what it is; but it is something like this: the third act of *The Sleeping Beauty*. It seems that the complete *Sleeping Beauty* takes about three hours to perform, and in its early days was not financially feasible, so Diaghileff salvaged some of the numbers, mostly from the final act, and welded them into a one-act fantasy called *Aurora's Wedding*. As the Sadler's Wells now presents it, it is the full-length version of the third act of *Sleeping Beauty*. Both of these recordings contain the same music (each is labelled "complete"), although the labelling of the RCA Victor disc is more inclusive. The one by Sadler's Wells' own orchestra, Covent Garden, is a splendid performance, and is coupled with an idiomatic performance of the *Faust* Ballet Music. Stokowski offers more of a concert performance, which is to say a less measured reading, freer and with more interpretive liberties, and Stokey indulges himself with many striking effects. The reproduction is of RCA's best "New Orthophonic" variety, more revealing than the MGM, which is good, if not quite as wide range as RCA.

The Urania disc presents a pair of uninspired performances of which the catalogs list much more interesting LP's of each of these works.

S.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35000TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35000) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 55 ("Eroica"). Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler. 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1044) \$5.95.

The day this review was written, an article appeared in *The Billboard* telling of a civil court ruling in Paris which ordered Urania to remove the name of Furtwängler from a recording of the *Eroica*, supposedly made by Furtwängler in a German studio in 1944. Furtwängler brought the suit because he claimed he could not recognize the performance as his own. We mention this, because it presumably deals with the disc which was one of five *Eroica* recordings which we reviewed in the October 1953 TNR. There can be no doubt that the present disc is conducted by Furtwängler, and there is little doubt

that it is a better example of the conductor's art than the *Urania* disc (which did not find favor in these columns). One noticeable difference is the tempo of the third movement which (as reported in October) Furtwängler took at 116; the present disc shows a more typical Furtwängler tempo of 108.

With twenty *Eroicas* now listed in the LP catalogs, these two new ones are indeed difficult to evaluate by comparison. Of those conductors who take the *tempi* on the brisk side, von Karajan is in their camp; while Furtwängler belongs to the group who favor slower tempi and more individual shaping of the phrases, resulting in more dramatic readings. Von Karajan's reading is of the Leinsdorf and Toscanini order, and he enjoys by far the best reproduction of these three—better than most of the rest of the recordings available. The reproduction of the Furtwängler disc is splendid, a little smoother than the Horenstein recording, which we admired so much before. We still think Horenstein is the most deeply felt and dramatic reading, the best listening experience of the whole lot. Those who take exception to this opinion (and there is a respectable number who do), will do well to investigate the von Karajan disc, for it is beauty of its kind, and one which we heartily respect if not prefer. Admirers of Furtwängler will find his disc one of his great recordings, and a masterly effort in its own right. And now your harried reviewer begins the new year with a fervent prayer for no more *Eroica* recordings.

S.

Wagner: Tristan und Isolde (excerpts). One side, and **Wagner: Die Götterdämmerung**—Siegfried's Funeral Music. Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. And **Wagner: Die Götterdämmerung**—Immolation Scene. Margaret Harshaw (soprano) with the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Eugene Ormandy. 1-12" disc (*ML-4742) \$5.95.

Wagner: Tannhäuser—Overture & Venusberg Music. One side, and **Wagner: Der fliegende Holländer**—Overture. And **Wagner: Die Walküre**—The Ride of the Valkyries. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Hans Knappertsbusch. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-800) \$5.95.

Wagner: Lohengrin—Preludes to Acts I & III. And **Wagner: Die Meistersinger**—Prelude. One side, and **Wagner: Tannhäuser**—Overture. And **Wagner: Die Walküre**—Ride of the Valkyries. Detroit Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paul Paray. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-50021) \$5.95.

With these three excellent LP discs, Wagnerian music lovers have a rare feast in store for them. Of especial interest is the Philadelphia Orchestra disc which contains most of the music from a recent Wagnerian program that packed the Academy of Music in Philadelphia for three concerts. Margaret Harshaw's Immolation Scene is superb and will take its deserved place with outstanding recordings

of this year. . . . We were also well impressed with the Vienna Philharmonic and the Detroit Symphony recordings under Knappertsbusch and Paray and do not hesitate to state that they are well worth investigation.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnol, Op. 34. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Leipzig conducted by Rolf Kleinert. One side, and **Lalo: Symphonie espagnole, Op. 21.** Ferdinand Meisel (violin) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Walter Schartner. 1-12" disc (*URURRS-7-13) \$3.50.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or—Suite. One and one-half sides, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Capriccio espagnol, Op. 34.** L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-694) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: The Tale of the Czar Sultan Suite, Op. 57. One side, and **Rimsky-Korsakov: Le Coq d'Or**—Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35010TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35010) \$5.95.

The *Urania Request Series* record listed above is, at the \$3.50 price, a good buy. It costs about 70% more to get Campoli, Heifetz, or Menuhin doing the Lalo violin work. The cost is also more to get Ansermet, Paray, or their calibre doing this *Capriccio espagnol*. Therefore, it is up to the one doing the buying to decide whether it is worth it or not; and to consider also the couplings involved and the quality of reproduction. *Urania's* reproduction in both these works is exceptionally brilliant, to the point where we thought it strident. The performances are good, if not outstanding, and at the price it is a worthwhile addition to the catalogs.

The Ansermet disc has a more beautifully delineated reading of the *Capriccio espagnol* than the *Urania*. Ansermet, in both the works on this disc, gives one of his typical performances, excelling in very carefully adjusted dynamics. There is a clarity and logic, combined with a subtleness and musicianly approach, that distinguish his music making among the best conductors of our day. Whether or not his finesse results in the best performance of music as flamboyant as Rimsky-Korsakov's is a question posed as soon as one hears a disc such as Dobrowen's. Dobrowen is not the fine-grained artist that Ansermet is, but Dobrowen's account of the *Coq d'Or Suite* is a stunning job. We did not mean to infer above that Dobrowen indulges in coarse or rough-hewn playing; quite the contrary, his orchestra is magnificent and the solo work throughout is superb. But Dobrowen paints the *Coq d'Or* picture with bolder and firmer strokes, and the results are something for the ear to enjoy. We must also admit that the reproduction accorded this music by Angel is a fuller and richer tapestry than London has achieved. Dobrowen continues the good work with a broadly

paced reading of the *Czar Sultan Suite*, with the same fine reproduction. We are impressed by this record, and name it the best of the three under consideration, even though we acknowledge the admirable artistry of Ansermet.

S.

Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F, Op. 90. Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Bohm. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-857) \$5.95.

Of the dozen LP recordings now in the catalog of the Brahms *Third*, we can say without exception, reservation, or other pussyfooting around that this is by all odds the best. We doubt that anyone would deny that it is the best sounding one from the standpoint of reproduction. It is a top-notch London recording, which makes it mighty good by today's best standards. There is a richness and bloom to the full orchestral sound which is not only beautiful, but becoming to the nature of the music; the string tone is notably fine too. And we would also doubt that anyone could overlook the superlative orchestral playing by the Vienna Philharmonic. Lately we have felt that some of the records by this distinguished orchestra were just not quite up to their usual high level, but in this recording they are as glorious as ever. There is a magnificent precision and discipline combined with a roundness and almost relaxed playing that is usually referred to as "in the Viennese tradition" because no one can quite describe in words this wonderful style of playing. It is here in full measure, and it is a pleasure to hear through every minute of the record.

As for Bohm's interpretation, we think it is one of the best things he has done. The first and last movements are not the easiest things to make hang together; Bohm has complete success with them and that goes a long way toward making this such a great performance. His tempo in the third movement is on the slow side, but it reveals much lovely orchestral playing and most persons will not feel that it is unduly slow. His command of the orchestra, without making the result brittle, is probably his greatest achievement, and the final result is completely satisfying; in fact, it is thrilling. S.

Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Herbert von Karajan. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35003TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35003) \$5.95.

Bartók's fascinating *Concerto for Orchestra* now appears in its third LP version. We believe most of his followers will prefer this to either of the previous versions. It is the best reproduction, for those to whom that is a paramount factor. Von Karajan and the virtuoso Philharmonia Orchestra offer a performance that is superior to any we ever recall hearing of this great work.

The work is in five movements; it is similar to a symphony with two scherzos. Bartók admitted the dual nature, symphonic and concertante, of the piece: "The title of this symphony-like orchestral

work is explained by its tendency to treat the single instruments or instrumental groups in a concerto or soloistic manner." He also said of the work generally that its "general mood . . . represents, apart from the jesting second movement, a gradual transition from the sternness of the first movement and the lugubrious death song of the third, to the life assertion of the last one."

While the music is interesting in each movement, many persons are attracted to the last movement, which is built on a sort of moto perpetuo which is designed to display the virtuosity of the string section. A series of fanfare subjects offer contrast and a brilliant subject for trumpet and make this exciting music and a glorious finale. The *Concerto for Orchestra* is probably destined to be Bartók's most popular work, and will definitely find a place high on the list of contemporary works which will remain in the repertoire for many decades. It was commissioned by Serge Koussevitzky and composed in the autumn of 1943.

S.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Argeo Quadri. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5234) \$5.95.

Rimsky-Korsakov: Scheherazade, Op. 35. Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Karl Rucht. 1-12" disc (*UR-URRS-7-19) \$3.50.

These two *Scheherazades* are numbers fifteen and sixteen and this reviewer, in trying to recall different performances, recording techniques, etc., had a recurrence of a feeling he had as a small boy when he stayed on the merry-go-round too long.

For a really lush version, particularly as regards recorded sound, the Westminster issue would be hard to beat although the earlier Mercury recording with Dorati was a stunning job. Quadri's conception of the score is different from the usual in that he stresses the musical and poetic rather than the dramatic and exotic elements of the work. This is most noticeable in the second section *The Tale of the Prince Kalander*. The over-all effect, to one accustomed to the Stokowski or Ormandy treatment, will seem a little tame at first but it has a tendency to grow on one.

Urania's bargain version is also an acceptable, if more conventional reading. The sound is quite good in spots, less satisfactory in others. As is most always the case, you get what you pay for—no more, no less.

This reviewer would be hard put to choose between the Quadri and Dorati discs either from the standpoint of recorded sound or interpretation. As to the other thirteen in the Schwann catalog, the only notable ones are those of Monteux, Stokowski and Ormandy and, of course, each of these will have its adherents.

For those who do not have a copy of Rimsky-Korsakov's musical tale of oriental splendor and adventure, it is suggested they listen to the Dorati

and Quadri recordings and forget the rest, unless price is an important factor, in which case, the *Urania* set is well worth investigating. There are notes with the Westminster release, none with the *Urania*.

W.

Glinka: Russian and Ludmilla—Suite. London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anatole Fistoulari. One side, and **Berlioz: Les Troyens**—Suite. Lamoureux Orchestra conducted by Jean Martinon. 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3053) \$4.85.

CONTENTS: Overture; Oriental Dances ("Leszghinka"); Fairy Dances; March of the Wizard (from "Russian and Ludmilla"). Overture; Royal Hunt and Storm; Ballet Music; Trojan March (from "Les Troyens").

Glinka: Russian and Ludmilla—Overture. And **Borodin: On the Steppes of Central Asia**. And **Moussorgsky: Night on Bald Mountain**. One side, and **Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25** ("Classical"). L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-864) \$5.95.

Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Op. 25 ("Classical"). And **Dukas: L'Apprenti sorcier**. One side, and **Falla: El Sombrero de Tres Picos**—Suite. And **Ravel: La Valse**. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Igor Markevitch. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35008TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*AG-35008) \$5.95.

If ever one man could have been said to have influenced both Russian and French music, Berlioz is that man. He took two extended trips to Russia, the first in 1847 and the last in 1867. On both occasions he left an indelible impression on its musical life both with his music and his conducting, not to mention the decided impact made by his forceful but gentlemanly personality.

It is entirely possible that Glinka, who was Berlioz' exact contemporary, could have heard some of the 1847 concerts; thus the coupling of the MGM disc is a happy one. The music from Berlioz' *Les Troyens* is well played and fairly well recorded. Glinka's *Russian and Ludmilla* survives only because of its sparkling overture but, as this disc demonstrates, the rest of the score is on an equally high plane and is, consequently, most attractive.

The real gem of the three records listed above, however, is the Ansermet on London. Here is a very clever and logically presented program of Russian music. The Prokofiev work is a model of orchestral playing and interpretation—it is puckish, graceful, and stylistically perfect. These same attributes are found in the other pieces on the obverse side. War horses all, but played and recorded in a manner that fairly takes one's breath away.

There remains the Angel record. It also includes the *Classical Symphony* in a faster version, less carefully worked out but played with plenty of

bravura. Its companion pieces are, in one writer's opinion, less appropriate musically but more logical chronologically—take your choice. They are well, if not too spectacularly played. Unfortunately, some of them depend on sensational performances to make their effects! The Angel reproduction is good, although quite different from the London "close up" technique. This becomes a matter of personal taste so little or nothing need be said about it. There are notes, good ones, supplied with all except the \$4.95 Angel "Thrift Package."

W.

Walton: Façade Suite. Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Constant Lambert. One side, and **Elgar: Wand of Youth Suite No. 1, Op. 1a**. Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Malcolm Sargent. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4793) \$5.95.

Here are fine renditions of two works by English composers that are reasonably popular with American audiences. There are other recordings of them in the LP catalogs, but because the present appropriate coupling and merit of the performances we would highly recommend the Columbia disc listed above.

Mozart: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat, K. 543. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. One side, and **Mozart: Serenade in G, K. 525** ("Eine kleine Nachtmusik"). London Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner (TNR Mar. '41). And **Haydn: "Toy" Symphony**. British Symphony Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4776) \$5.95.

Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Haydn, Op. 56a ("St. Antoni Chorale"). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. One side, and **Bach: Suite No. 3 in D**. L'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4783) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '39 & Jan. '41).

Strauss: (4) Waltzes. Orchestras conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4777) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *On the Beautiful Blue Danube* (TNR Oct. '38); *1001 Nights* (TNR May '39); *Voices of Spring* (TNR May '39); *Wine, Women and Song* (TNR Oct. '41).

All of the above discs are re-issues from 78 rpm records. The Mozart 39th was issued in England, but never was issued in America; we should not choose it over Beecham's fine version (*C-ML-4674). This disc will therefore appeal only to Weingartner fans. The same must also be said for *C-ML-4783; Toscanini has a better *Haydn Variations* (*V-LM-1725) and Reiner's new recording of the four Bach Suites for Orchestra, reviewed in this issue, should leave little demand for an isolated recording of Suite No. 3.

And, really, Columbia! Do you expect a body

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.

Ø indicates 45 rpm.

to pay \$5.95 for 13- to 15-year old recordings of Strauss Waltzes?

Mozart: Symphony No. 35 in D, K. 385 ("Haffner"). One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 36 in C, K. 425** ("Linz"). London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4770) \$5.95. (TNR Apr. '40 & Dec. '39).

Haydn: Symphony No. 4 in D ("London"). One side, and **Schubert: Symphony No. 5 in B-flat**. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4771) \$5.95. (TNR July '40 & June '39).

Mozart: Symphony No. 34 in C, K. 338. One side, and **Mozart: Symphony No. 29 in A, K. 201**. London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4781) \$5.95. (TNR July '44 & Aug. '38).

We suppose that there are many admirers of Sir Thomas, who may have the above recordings on 78 rpm, who would like to replace them with LP's for one reason or another. If so, they are now available. We rather think that persons seeking recordings of these works would prefer more modern reproduction, although there's no denying that Beecham is certainly in his element in this music.

We have but one quarrel with Columbia here. Sir Thomas is still living; and apparently Columbia can profitably issue new Beecham records at \$5.95. Then why charge \$5.95 for a re-issue? We think that these discs should have been placed on the "Entré" series (at \$2.98!). Our point is that if a 1953 recording of Beecham is worth \$5.95, then a 1938 one, no matter how fine the performance, is not.

Brahms: (7) Hungarian Dances. One side, and **Dvořák: (4) Slavonic Dances**. Hamburg Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-779) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Hungarian Dances Nos. 1 in G minor, 2 in D minor, 3 in F, 5 in F-sharp minor, 6 in D-flat, 7 in A, 10 in F; Slavonic Dances Op. 46, Nos. 1, 2, 3; Slavonic Dance Op. 72, No. 16.

Brahms: (9) Hungarian Dances. Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4078) \$2.50.

CONTENTS: Hungarian Dances Nos. 1 in G minor, 3 in F, 5 in G minor (trans. from F-sharp minor), 6 in D (trans. from D-flat), 17 in A (trans. from F-sharp minor), 18 in D, 19 in B minor, 20 in E minor, 21 in E minor.

If it is the Brahms Hungarian Dances you are interested in, we suggest that you choose the Decca recording. It may not be quite as good as the London version but the London recording is certainly not worth twice the price. We are judging this pair of discs from an economical angle.

Bach: (4) Suites for Orchestra. RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Fritz Reiner. 2-12" discs in box (*V-LM-6012) \$11.44.

We cannot see how lovers of the immortal Johann Sebastian can help being mighty enthusiastic about this superb pair of discs. It makes a perfect package with one suite on each of the four sides of these LP records. Fritz Reiner has been afforded a fine orchestra, and with his genius for perfection he has spared no pains to produce renditions that call for the highest praise.

We bespeak for this fine album your earnest consideration. Alfred Frankenstein has supplied a booklet of excellent and illuminating notes.

Black Magic. Andre Kostelanetz and His Orchestra. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4741) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: That Old Black Magic; Mad About the Boy; Our Waltz; Little Girl Blue; Some Day; Out of This World; Easy To Love; Limehouse Blues.

Kostelanetz has selected a group of popular songs that have stood the test of time and given them his magic touch on the present LP disc. His many admirers will certainly want to add this one to their collection of Kostelanetz recordings.



CONCERTO

Brahms: Concerto No. 1 in D minor, Op. 15. Clifford Curzon (piano) with the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam conducted by Eduard van Beinum. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-850) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Artur Schnabel (piano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Issay Dobrowen. 1-12" disc (*V-LCT-1131) \$5.72. (TNR Sept. '47).

The Brahms first piano concerto has long been regarded as a forbidding piece of music; and in this performance, excellent though it is, this impression remains. The austerity of the work is not so much the result of inner discipline, one feels, as it is a plain lack of congeniality or absence of grace. Perhaps its hybrid conception (it was first conceived as a piano sonata then as a symphony) has something to do with its angularity and essential barrenness. The annotator of the jacket notes admits "(it) may be a difficult musical friend to win" and goes on to state that it is well worth the winning. This latter part of his statement may or may not be so.

The performance is a sumptuous one. Both van Beinum and Curzon are at concert pitch and the resultant sound, fervor and excitement have been superbly captured by London's engineers. It would be difficult to imagine a more stirring recording and admirers of this concerto need look no further for the best presentation of the work on discs.

The late Arthur Schnabel was famous for his Beethoven performances and this re-issue on an LP disc will gratify the many admirers of his art. The

Beethoven concerto needs no extended remarks here, nor does Schnabel's playing. Both are familiar and it will suffice to say that in the transfer to LP the sound of the original 78's seems to improve in quality. The net result, however, is not as good as a modern, first class LP (such as the Westminster recording of the same work by Badura-Skoda) but neither does it make any undue demands on the listener's aural charity.

This reviewer was saddened to learn, a short while ago, of Issay Dobrowen's untimely death. Thus the disc takes on an added melancholy, for Dobrowen was an excellent musician. His greatest recorded performance was, undoubtedly the magnificent *Boris Godounov* made only a year or so ago for HMV.

W.

Ravel: Concerto in G. Marguerite Long (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by Georges Tzipine. One side, and **Fauré: Ballade, Op. 19.**

Marguerite Long (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris conducted by André Cluytens. 1-12" disc (*ANG-35013TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35013) \$5.95.

Ravel: Concerto in D for the Left Hand Alone. One side, and **Ravel: Concerto in G.** Jacqueline Blancard (piano) with l'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande conducted by Ernest Ansermet. 1-12" disc (*L-LL-797) \$5.95.

The name of Mme. Long has long been associated with the music of Ravel and Fauré; the *Concerto in G* is dedicated to her, and her performances are always considered authentic interpretations. This fact, along with the good reproduction Angel has supplied would seem to indicate that the Angel record would be the preferred disc. After hearing the Angel and the London discs, one is aware that the foregoing is altered by the presence of Ansermet, who conducts the orchestra on the London disc. Cluytens and Tzipine do fine work, but Ansermet is on another, and higher, plane entirely. We doubt that anyone has ever heard more superlative orchestral performances of the Ravel scores than Ansermet turns in. His unique sense of dynamics and shadings of tone is applied with all the finesse at his command, and they serve this music just perfectly. London has captured the delicacy of this exceptional music making in its best fashion, which reveals every nuance ever so beautifully. Jacqueline Blancard performs with an inspiration, at least some of which was radiated by the conductor. She is a fine pianist, and her readings contribute to the stature of this disc.

Ravel worked at both his piano concertos together. The one for two hands he regarded as a *divertissement*, but then, as he tells us, it is in the Mozartean manner, if not in the idiom of the eighteenth century, and he decided that the word *concerto* was

fittest to describe it. The concerto for left hand brought its own problems, mainly those of tone-weight. It was not Ravel's purpose to show what the left hand can do so much as to prove what can be done for the left hand. Such technical tests were meat and drink to him and the result here is a triumph of technique. These illuminating facts are from the fine notes on the London jacket, written by H. G. Sear, which will aid your enjoyment of this great music.

S.

Beethoven: Concerto in D, Op. 61. Bronislaw Hubermann (violin) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by George Szell. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4769) \$5.95.

Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, Op. 64. Joseph Szigeti (violin) with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Sir Thomas Beecham. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2217) \$4. (TNR Mar. '34).

Beethoven: Concerto in C, Op. 56 ("Triple"). Ricardo Odnoposoff (violin), Stefan Auber (violincello) and Angelecia Morales (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Felix Weingartner. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2218) \$4. (TNR June '38).

Three more re-issues from 78's this month, the Beethoven Concerto having been released only in England, never in U. S. A., previously. Hubermann is a pretty fine fiddler; but we see no particular need to bring over this recording at this late day. Szigeti recorded the Mendelssohn sizzler in 1934 (!); R. I. P. . . There is only one other LP recording of the "Triple" Concerto, that of Corigliano, Rose and Hendl with Bruno Walter and the New York Philharmonic (*C-ML-2059) (TNR Sept. '49). Both are fine performances, but we must give the nod to the later version for better reproduction.

Shostakovich: Concerto in C minor. Victor Aller (piano) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin, with Mannie Klein (trumpet). One side, and **Hindemith: Theme and (4) Variations** ("The Four Temperaments"). Victor Aller (piano) with the Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Felix Slatkin. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8230) \$5.70.

The Shostakovich Piano Concerto appears in its second recording; the previous issue was originally a 78 rpm, later transferred to LP (*C-ML-4389), performed by Eileen Joyce with the Hallé Orchestra under Leslie Heward and with Arthur Lockwood, trumpet. The Joyce performance is a more lively and percussive one, and the reproduction more strident than the newer Capitol issue. The artists on the newer version are not unaware of the superficial nature of the music, but they do have a more temperate approach to the score. Which performance is preferable is more than we care to say. We would settle for the matter of couplings offered on

the two discs. Columbia couples this work with the Prokofiev *Third Concerto*, with Dimitri Mitropoulos, pianist and conductor of the orchestra, in an idiomatic reading.

The Capitol disc couples Shostakovich with Hindemith's "The Four Temperaments." This is a theme with four variations. This work was begun as a setting for a ballet; however, the project was abandoned, and when published, the music bore no reference to any program. The title refers to the titles given the four variations of the theme: Melancholic, Sanguine, Phlegmatic, and Choleric. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries physicians evolved a theory that a person's temperament was determined by the predominance of the type of moisture that existed in his body. There is supposed to be much humor in this work, particularly in the Phlegmatic section. It must be over our head because we found little humor, or anything else, of much interest. Maybe our moisture content was not right for listening to the music at this time, but we found it mighty dry (Phlegmatic?). As it is supposed to be one of Hindemith's great scores, we recommend it to his admirers for what they may find in it. It is ably performed and nicely recorded.

S.

Dvořák: Concerto in B minor, Op. 104. Antonio Janigro (violoncello) with the Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Dean Dixon. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5225) \$5.95.

It will be too bad if one looks at a listing of this work in the catalogs and says, "I'll take the Casals, please." Because one will be missing a great rendition of this romantic concerto if he fails to investigate this disc. After hearing both, he may still prefer Casals' version, in spite of the older reproduction; but one would still have to admit that Mr. Janigro gives the Spaniard a run for his money.

And this is a curious combination, too! The work of a Czech composer, reportedly inspired by an American cellist (Victor Herbert), played by an Italian soloist accompanied by a Viennese orchestra conducted by a Negro. Somehow these elements get together to give us an inspired performance; Mr. Janigro seems to be playing his heart out, and obviously enjoys doing it. Mr. Dixon has captured this enthusiasm and transmitted it to the orchestra, making this disc a truly memorable one. We enjoyed every minute of it.

Of course it would not be fair to compare Westminster's A-1 reproduction with Casals (*V-LCT-1026); Nelsova's version (*L-LL-537, TNR Jan. '53) has beautiful sound, but we feel Nelsova and Krips have been outclassed, performance-wise, by Janigro and Dixon. Piatigorsky and Ormandy (*C-ML-4022) who used to rank second in our book, are now relegated to third. If reproduction is at all important to you, you'll put Janigro first. J.

Distinguished Concerti for Wind Instruments (Vol. I). Louis Cahuzac (clarinet) with the Copenhagen Royal Opera Orchestra conducted by John Frandsen. 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2219) \$4.

CONTENTS: Nielsen: *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra*, Op. 57.

Distinguished Concerti for Wind Instruments (Vol. II). Leon Goossens (oboe) with orchestral accompaniments. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4782) \$5.95

CONTENTS: *Concerto for Oboe and Strings* (Cimarosa—arr. Benjamin); *Easter Oratorio—Sinfonia* (Bach—arr. Whittaker); *Concerto in C minor for Oboe and Strings* (Marcello); *Concerto in A for Oboe d'amore, Strings and Continuo* (Bach—arr. Tovey); *Concerto Grosso in G minor, Op. 3, No. 10* (Handel).

Distinguished Concerti for Wind Instruments (Vol. III). Dennis Brain (horn) and Leon Goossens (oboe) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Alceo Galliera. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4775) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Concerto No. 1 in E-flat for Horn and Orchestra*, Op. 11 (R. Strauss); *Concerto for Oboe and Orchestra* (R. Strauss).

Columbia has gathered together a vast amount of fine music for wind instruments and orchestra on these three unusual LP discs. The space available does not permit our going into their contents in detail but we can say that they have been most faithfully recorded and that the artists are among the leading instrumentalists of Europe.

CHAMBER MUSIC



The Complete String Quartets of Arnold Schönberg. Juilliard String Quartet with Uta Graf (soprano). 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-188) \$17.85.

CONTENTS: *Quartet No. 1 in D minor, Op. 7; Quartet No. 2 in F-sharp minor for Strings and Soprano, Op. 10; Quartet No. 3, Op. 30; Quartet No. 4, Op. 37* (Schönberg). *Five Movements for String Quartet, Op. 5* (Webern). *String Quartet, Op. 3* (Berg).

This album will undoubtedly prove to be an artistic success although it will have a very limited appeal. Its appeal will be to those who love and understand the great art of Arnold Schönberg. It contains inspired renditions of his four string quartets which date from 1905, 1910, 1927 and 1936 and in addition a chamber work by each of his most distinguished pupils, Anton von Webern and Alban Berg. These works by Webern and Berg were both composed when they were pupils of the master and clearly show their instructor's influence.

If it were available much space could be given to a discussion of this unusual music but as very comprehensive notes are supplied with these records,

those who are interested may turn to them for enlightenment.

Mozart: (3) Divertimenti in B-flat, K. Anh. 229. Leopold Wlach and Franz Bartosek (clarinets) and Karl Oehlberger (bassoon). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5213) \$5.95.

Mozart: Quartet in B-flat, K. 589. One side, and

Mozart: Quartet in F, K. 590. Barchet Quartet. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8260) \$5.95.

These three little woodwind divertimenti of Mozart's are welcome additions to the catalog of that well-beloved composer's LP recordings. They will have a limited appeal we know, but they will doubtless be highly attractive to the discerning lovers of Mozart's chamber music. . . . The two quartets on the second record are now represented with adequate recorded versions in the present LP catalogs. The Barchet Quartet have supplied excellent renditions of these popular Mozart chamber works and should be considered if they are not now in your library.

Beethoven: Trio in E-flat, Op. 3. Jean Pougnet (violin); Frederick Craig Riddle (viola); Anthony Pini (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5226) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Quartet in B-flat, Op. 18, No. 6. Barylli Quartet. One side, and **Beethoven: Quintet in C, Op. 29.** Barylli Quartet with Wilhelm Huebner (viola). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5212) \$5.95.

Beethoven: Trio in C minor, Op. 9, No. 3. One side, and **Beethoven: Trio in D, Op. 8 ("Serenade").** Jean Pougnet (violin); Frederick Craig Riddle (viola); Anthony Pini (violoncello). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5219) \$5.95.

All of the Beethoven chamber music on these three records is already available on LP discs except the early *Trio in E-flat, Op. 3*. It is very probable that this engaging little work dates from the Bonn period although it was not published until Beethoven had gone to Vienna in 1792. It is a gay little work and we are very glad to welcome it to the repertory of LP recordings.

CHORAL



Fauré: Requiem. Patricia Beems (soprano); Theodor Uppman (baritone); Roger Wagner Chorale and Concert Arts Orchestra conducted by Roger Wagner. 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8241) \$5.70.

Gabriel Fauré was, when one considers his long life and the period during which he lived, a strange and almost anomalous figure. During an age that saw all sorts of allegiances to Franck, Wagner, Massenet and others, Fauré seemed to care for none of the reaction and "party lines" and thus, in addition to being suspect by all parties, his music seemed remote, untouched, as it were, by the fret and fury

of the times.

This is particularly true of the *Requiem*, written on the death of his parents (1887-88). Here is music that is "Christian" in the truest sense of the word. Martin Cooper points out, very aptly, that one of the chief charms of the work lies in its melodic simplicity that approaches "the verge of bareness." This deliberate limitation of effect, writes Mr. Cooper, "wonderfully expresses the feeling of resignation, an undemonstrative grief, shot through with the feeling of completion and fulfilment proper to the death of the old."

The performance Capitol has captured with such wonderful clarity and balance is a sterling one. The Roger Wagner Chorale, favorably known to phonophiles from previous recordings, sings with an almost ecstatic quality that fits the music like a glove, carrying out Fauré's intentions (avowed or instinctive). Their singing is notable for beauty of tone, expressiveness and a pianissimo that is as beautiful as it is rare. The soloists are both excellent; Miss Beems doing a particularly impressive job with the exquisite *Sanctus*.

Roger Wagner does magnificent work with his chorale and the Concert Arts Orchestra. There is real inspiration evident and much, if not all of it, must be credited to the conductor. The previous recordings of this work, by Leibowitz on Oceanic and Bournmauch on Columbia are definitely put in the shade.

W.

Bach: Mass in B minor. Gunthild Weber (soprano); Margherita de Landi (alto); Helmut Krebs (tenor); Karl Wolfram (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 2-12" discs in folder (*UR-URRS-2-1) \$7.

Bach: Mass in B minor. Gunthild Weber (soprano); Margherita de Landi (alto); Helmut Krebs (tenor); Karl Wolfram (bass); Chorus and Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Fritz Lehmann. 2-12" discs in album (*BG-527/8) \$5.95.

Two recordings of the *B minor Mass* appear this month and, through some curious contrepéts, both are the same performance. *Urania*, it would seem, led with its King of Trumps only to have Bach Guild lay down the Ace. The *Urania* set at \$7.00, had Bach Guild stuck to its original price, would have been \$4.90 cheaper; but not to be outdone, the latter lowered its price to that of a single record, \$5.95—so there can be no question as to the better buy between the two sets, for the Bach Guild one is handsomely boxed, complete with notes and text. The *Urania* set is completely innocent of anything except advertising. Even so, one can hardly applaud Bach Guild's action for, while superficially the buyer seems to profit, such goings on will, in the long run, be detrimental to the record business and then everyone suffers.

Now, as to the subject of all this confusion, The performance of the monumental *B minor Mass* as

captured here is nothing to rave about. Musically it is not as good as the Westminster set under Dr. Scherchen—it struck this listener as being routine and that is one thing you can not be with the *B minor Mass*. Even under ideal conditions, with everyone at concert pitch, there will be spots that are difficult—it is that kind of a masterpiece. The soloists and chorus here are adequate—that is, they sing all the notes—but nothing more. Fritz Lehmann holds his forces together in acceptable fashion but does little else.

Owners of the Westminster set need not feel "had", as the saying goes, for it is worth every penny of the difference in price. The sound is superior to that of the present sets, although that of the Bach Guild is better than *Urania's*, which has a tendency to be shrill. W.

Gregorian Chant. *Piux X Choir of Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart* directed by Mother Josephine Morgan, R.S.C.J. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-PX-3) \$4.75.

CONTENTS: *Mass No. 11 ("Orbis factor"); Mass No. 4 ("Cunctipotens").*

Here is another disc containing examples of the work of the *Pius X Choir* of the *Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart* made up of girl students of that famous educational institution. It shows what young people can do in the line of liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church if they are afforded proper instruction.

OPERA



Lortzing: Zar and Zimmermann (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Würtemberg State Theatre conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 2-12" discs in album (*D-DX-129) \$11.70.

THE CAST

Peter I, Czar of Russia.....Horst Günter (Bt)
 Peter IvanowAlfred Pfeifle (T)
 van BettGustav Neidlinger (Bs)
 Marie, his nieceElinor Junker-Giesen (S)
 Widow BrownTherese Anders (MS)
 Marquis of Chateauneuf.....Walther Ludwig (T)
 Admiral LefortGustav Grefe (T)

For a delightful change in musical fare, a hearing of Lortzing's *chef-d'œuvre*, the fantastically popular (in Germany) *Zar und Zimmermann* is indicated. From its sparkling overture on through to its happy ending the work is a veritable gem; and Lortzing achieves an almost Wagnerian "German-ness" without resorting to the pomposity and lack of humor that distinguishes the work of his more illustrious compatriot.

Zar and Zimmermann was first produced at Leipzig on 22 December 1837 and an index of its unique hold on the German people can be measured by the

fact that during a recent operatic season, statistics show that *Zar und Zimmermann*, with the exception of *Fidelio*, received more performances in Germany's sixty odd opera houses than any other opera, outdistancing such favorites as *Meistersinger*, *Rigoletto* and *Carmen*.

The reasons for its popularity are not hard to find; a delightful story, tuneful music and characters that have more than a semblance of reality about them are the elements of *Zar und Zimmermann*. And, sung by this excellent cast, the work makes a lot of sense. Chief honors go to bass Gustav Neidlinger for a first-rate characterization of the pompous van Bett. His *Sancta Justicia* is a comic masterpiece and throughout the performance he is a tower of strength both vocally and histrionically. Peter, the Czar, is sung—very well sung one should add—by Horst Günter. Elinor Junker-Giesen, as Marie, displays a charming, light soprano that is both musical and in character. Others in the long cast are on an equally high plane.

Chorus and orchestra under Ferdinand Leitner's sure and musical direction respond with sincerity and animation. A well prepared libretto and brief notes on the artists complete this set which can be highly recommended on all counts. W.

Giordano: Andrea Chenier (complete). Sung in Italian. Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra conducted by Arturo Basile. 3-12" discs in box (*CE-C-1244) \$17.85.

THE CAST

Andrea ChenierJosé Soler (T)
 Maddalena de CoignyRenata Tebaldi (S)
 Carlo GerardUgo Savarese (Bt)
 La Contessa de Coigny.....Irma Colsanti (MS)
 RoucherGiuliano Ferrein (Bs)
 Fouquier Tinville }

Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* receives its second complete LP performance. As in the earlier recording by *Urania*, the performance suffers from inadequate tenoring. And since the leading (and title) role is for tenor, a mediocre voice is no asset. Further, since the part is an intensely dramatic one, a singer who is unable to convey the meaning of the words is a decided liability. An illuminating example is José Soler's attempt to sing the magnificent *Un di all'azzure spazio*. The words of this aria are, in reality, very fine—good poetry and the sentiment is as noble as could be desired; but Soler is quite unable to project the fervor of the music and, as a result, the scene falls flat. In playing the set, notice particularly the passage:

Varcai degli abitori l'usucio
 Un uom di calunnian'a bestemmiando
 il suolo che l'errario a pena sazia
 e contre Dio scagliana e contre a li uomini
 le lacrime de' figli!

(I entered a humble abode, a man there cursed

aloud his God and the lords of man, then hurled at mankind the blame for his children's tears). The Chénier of this set might just as well be singing the weather report for all the drama he manages to convey. Those who have heard Zenatello or Martinelli sing the music will understand what the writer has in mind.

Tebaldi is, as always, superb. Her Maddalena has fire, passion and abandon while vocally, of course, she is mistress of all she attempts. Ugo Savarese is a better than average Gérard both in his singing and in his acting. Others in the cast are of varying degrees of competency.

Andrea Chénier is a dramatic work and requires singing actors and actresses. When these demands are met the work becomes great but when only one of the principals is mis-cast, the work collapses like a house of cards. This is the fate of the opera in this present recording. W.

Lehar: Die lustige Witwe (complete). (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Emmy Loose (sopranos); Nicolai Gedda (tenor); Anton Niessner, Erich Kunz, Otaker Kraus (baritones); Josef Schmidinger (bass); Philharmonia Orchestra and Chorus conducted by Otto Ackerman. 2-12" discs (*ANG-35033/4TP) \$9.90. 2-12" discs in factory-sealed album (*ANG-3501B) \$11.90.

It is difficult to understand, in view of its sparkling score and wide popularity, why Franz Lehar's evergreen *Die lustige Witwe* had to wait so long for its first complete recording. As it turns out, it was well worth waiting for, since a better performance than this one would be hard to imagine.

Ernest Newman points out, in his notes on the operetta, that the *Merry Widow* is almost contemporaneous with Strauss' very different (to say the least) *Salomé*, having been presented for the first time in Vienna some three weeks after Strauss' gory opus. Since that time, 30 December 1905, it has reigned as a popular favorite and, given a presentation such as this, will probably continue as such for years to come.

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf as Hanna is little short of superb in a role that demands some top flight (literally and figuratively) singing. Her phrasing and exquisite beauty of tone are those of a superior artist. Emmy Loose, the Valencienne of the recording, also turns in a performance that could hardly be bettered. The men, headed by the excellent Erich Kunz as Danilo (Count Danilo Danilowitsch is the full handle) are not to be outdone. Kunz's singing and acting are those of an artist with a well-developed sense of humor, and his pleasing baritone is always a delight. A real surprise is the young Swedish tenor, Nicolai Gedda, whose open tenor is as unexpected (in a Scandinavian) as it is beautiful. Here is a young man to watch! Lack of space precludes detailed discussion of the merits of Anton Niessner, a superior baritone, and the others—it must suffice

to say that they more than hold their own with the others in the cast.

Otto Ackermann's direction is excellent, being notable for its sane pace and good taste. As is Angel's practice, there are two editions: one without notes or any packaging—only the records; while the other, a de luxe deal, complete with notes, pictures, a libretto—the works. In this instance the additional \$2.00 would be well spent. Make a place alongside your copy of *Die Fledermaus* for this one. W.

Mozart: Don Giovanni—Dalla sua pace (Act I).

And Mozart: Don Giovanni—Il mio tesoro (Act II).

One side, and **Nicolai: Die lustigen Weiber**

von Windsor—Horch, die Lerche (Act II).

And Smetana: The Bartered Bride—Es muss gelingen

(Act II). Walther Ludwig (tenor) with the

Württemberg State Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4073) \$2.50.

The German tenor, Walther Ludwig, sings these operatic arias quite nicely, the Mozart in Italian and the others in German. If you should like this rather odd mixture of selections, Mr. Ludwig's renditions will probably be very satisfactory.

Monteverdi: Il Ballo dell' Ingrate ("The Dance of the Ungrateful Souls") (complete). (Sung in Italian). Emma Tegani (soprano), Claudia Carbi (mezzo-soprano), Luigi Sgarro (bass), Chorus and Orchestra da Camera di Milano conducted by Ennio Gerelli. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8090) \$5.95.

In 1608 the wedding of Francesco, the heir apparent of the house of Mantua, to Margareta di Savoia took place. For the attendant festivities Monteverdi wrote his famous *Ariana* (now all lost except the wonderful *Lamento*) and the less well known *Ballo dell' Ingrate*. A contemporary account states that the music "moved the listeners to tears, touched their hearts and created a highly emotional state in the audience."

Il Ballo dell' Ingrate is designated by Monteverdi as a composition *in genre rappresentativo*, the term for theatrical music. The story concerns itself with a visit of Amor and Venus to the Underworld where Pluto is prevailed upon to bring up a few ungrateful souls who refused love while on earth, to show the living the sad fate that awaited them should they, too, persist in refusing the love of their suitors. The somewhat flippant text is interspersed with fulsome praise for the house of Mantua.

This recording, issued by Vox, is a fine one, even though the edition used, that of Roberto Luppi, utilizes a modern orchestra. (The original orchestration, if the term may be used, consisted of five viole da braccio, harpsichord and a chitarrone. The number of instruments could be doubled, Monteverdi added, if necessary, on account of a large hall). The singers are excellent, particularly Luigi Sgarro, a first-rate bass who sings the part of Pluto with feeling and fine regard for style. Maestro Gerelli keeps the

work from dullness with his brisk but unhurried tempi. The only fault one can find is in the use, presumably, of Emma Tegani (the Amor) as the one Ungrateful Soul who sings the moving air *Aer sereno e puro*—her voice is too robust for that of a departed spirit.

Good sound, excellent notes and the complete text (Italian-English) are added features of this set.

W.



VOCAL

Recital of Schubert Lieder. Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) accompanied by Edwin Fischer (piano). 1-12" disc (*ANG-35022TP) \$4.95. 1-12" factory-sealed disc (*ANG-35022) \$5.95.

Lieder recitals are becoming very common on LP discs, hardly a month passes that does not see the release of at least one and sometimes two or three discs devoted to this genre. Now to sing *lieder* well is, in many ways, a more difficult artistic task than to go through an operatic performance. In the latter the artist is assisted by scenery, props and, essentially, more dramatic, less subtle, music.

On this disc Miss Schwarzkopf is the most fortunate of singers in that she has that prince of pianists, Edwin Fischer, as her accompanist. Herr Fischer is an artist to his finger-tips; he is not the possessor of a great technique (although it is always more than adequate), but he has a sure sense of the music and plays more expressively than any pianist this reviewer has ever heard, off or on records. Thus Elisabeth Schwarzkopf starts off ahead of virtually every other singer who has recorded *lieder*. Vocally she leaves nothing to be desired—she has a voice that is colorful and her phrasing (one sense Fischer's guiding hand here) is that of a mature artist. In addition, she has an understanding of what is required of her in these songs and is able to project the mood in virtually perfect fashion.

Among the songs she has chosen are some that are very familiar: *An die Musik*, *Ganymede*, *Gretchen am Spinnrade*, *An Sylvia* and *Der Musensohn*. They are all sung in perfect taste. Among the lesser known songs are *Im Frühling*, *Wemuht*, and *Nähhe des Geliebte*. There are a few other songs on the record, such as *Auf dem Wasser zu singen* and *Die junge Nonne* that fall into an intermediate category insofar as popularity is concerned.

This disc may be accounted one of the better ones in its field and, as an introduction to the form, could hardly be improved upon. It should be pointed out that there are two prices. For \$4.95 you may purchase the disc in a plain jacket—no notes or texts. For \$5.95 you receive a factory sealed package that is exactly the same record but boxed very attractively along with the German texts and some additional notes on the songs. The recording is good and the English pressings are very quiet.

W.

French Traditional Songs. Shep Ginandes (singer). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-9) \$4.45.

American Folk Songs of Sadness and Melancholy. Hally Wood (singer). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-10) \$4.45.

Early English Folk Songs. Cynthia Gooding (singer). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-11) \$4.45.

Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Tom Paley (singer). 1-10" disc (*ELEKTRA EKL-12) \$4.45.

These four LP discs contain quite a variety of folk music of one kind or another. *French Traditional Songs* are not folk songs from the rural areas of France but a group of songs that were born and bred in the cabarets and vaudeville theatres of the larger French cities, especially Paris. They sometimes tend toward lewdness, often have a tinge of irony, and are sometimes quite sentimental in an earthy way. . . . *American Folk Songs of Sadness and Melancholy* contains a number of American folk songs that may be appropriately classed under that title, the most important of which is *O Lovely Appearance of Death* by the famous 18th century revivalist preacher, George Whitefield, a friend of Benjamin Franklin's. Mr. Franklin wrote about him at quite some length in his famous Autobiography. . . . *Early English Folk Songs* are sung by one of America's most able singers in that field, Cynthia Gooding. *The Queen of Hearts* and *Queen Eleanor's Confession* are of prime interest in this group of a dozen songs that Miss Gooding has chosen for this fine disc. . . . In *Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachian Mountains*, Tom Paley introduces a number of dance tunes played on his five-string banjo or his guitar in addition to the several songs that he sings. Paley feels that the accompaniments are important, too, in rendering such folk songs and demonstrates his instrumental ability quite convincingly on the present interesting disc.

ORGAN



American Organ Music. Catharine Crozier, playing the Aeolian-Skinner Organ in the First Baptist Church, Longview (Texas). 1-12" disc (*KENDALL LP-2555) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Rhythmic Trumpet* (Bingham); *Promenade*, *Air* and *Toccata* (Haines); *Requiescat in pace* (Sowerby); *Gargoyles* (Edmundson); *Fantasy for Flute Stops* (Sowerby); *Prelude on "Iam sol reredit igneus"* (Simonds).

Sowerby: Symphony in G for Organ. Catharine Crozier, playing the Aeolian-Skinner Organ in the First Baptist Church, Longview (Texas). 1-12" disc (*KENDALL LP-2554) \$5.95.

A little more than a year ago we reviewed three Kendall records played by Miss Crozier made on the

organ in Kilbourn Hall, Rochester, N. Y. These new records were made on a recent organ of 85 ranks (named in the heading above) and are recorded with fine fidelity, the recording characteristics of which are stated on the record jacket. Her previous records found high praise in these columns; the music on them was Bach, Reubke, and contemporary French music. The present discs show Miss Crozier as an equally adept performer of contemporary American organ music. The miscellaneous collection, noted above, is very representative of the best serious writing for organ now being done in our country. All of it has a decided modern tinge, and those who do not go for the modern school will do well to stay away from both of these discs. Others will find the music rewarding; it is played in a superb manner. It would be hard to single out any one selection as the best, for several of them are recital favorites of many organists. We particularly like the *Fantasy for Flute Stops and Rhythmic Trumpet*, but every one is thoroughly worth while.

Sowerby's *Symphony in G for Organ* is a far cry from the Widor organ symphonies. It shows an originality that owes nothing to Widor nor anyone else, save for the forms in which the movements are cast. The three movements are: First—marked Very Broadly, Moderately Fast, and is in sonata-allegro form. The second movement is marked Fast and Sinister, and is a free rondo, which contains many striking rhythmic patterns. The third movement is marked Passacaglia, and it is just that. This Passacaglia is a gigantic affair of 33 variations on a theme in G major, that is very simple, but a mighty good one. In the first 26 variations the theme is in the pedal, but in the remaining 7 many contrapuntal devices are used with the theme in the upper voices. While its immediate appeal is limited, it is a great service to have this monumental work recorded, and nothing but praise could be offered for Miss Crozier's splendid performance.

S.

The Organ in Symphony Hall: Great Cathedral Music (Vol. I). Reginald Foort, playing the Aeolian-Skinner organ at Symphony Hall (Boston). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1054) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Toccata and Fugue in D minor* (Bach); *When Thou Art Near* (Bach); *Suite Gothique—Gothic Minute & Prayer to Our Lady* (Boellmann); *Toccata* (Dubois).

The Organ in Symphony Hall: Great Cathedral Music (Vol. II). Reginald Foort, playing the Aeolian-Skinner organ at Symphony Hall (Boston). 1-10" disc (*SOT-1055) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Arrival of the Queen of Sheba* (Handel); *Water Music Suite—Hornpipe, Air, Coro* (Handel); *Arioso* (Handel); *Sonata for Organ—Finale* (Reubke).

Emory Cook, who has produced some of the best high fidelity recordings under his famous "Sounds

of Our Times" label, has turned his attention to the recording of some organ music of Bach and Handel under ideal circumstances. He has secured the services of the distinguished English organist, Reginald Foort, and has made available to him the new Aeolian-Skinner organ in Symphony Hall (Boston). What with Mr. Cook's fine recording technique and the superb acoustics of this famous auditorium we are happy to report that the results are just what one might expect—top-notch high fidelity recordings of real artistic value.

PIANO



Brahms: Variations on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 35. One side, and **Brahms: Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel, Op. 24.** Sascha Gorodnitzki (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8227) \$5.70.

Brahms: Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 21, No. 1. One side, and **Schumann: Fantasia in C, Op. 17** (dedicated to Franz Liszt). Andor Foldes (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9708) \$5.85.

Neither of these discs are anything to rave about from a technical standpoint. We have heard much better piano reproduction than is to be found on the Capitol disc and the surfaces of the Decca disc are not as quiet as we would like them. The only interest that we had in these two records was centered on Andor Foldes' fine performance of Brahms' *Variations on an Original Theme, Op. 21, No. 1*, which appears on LP discs for the first time. Better recordings of all of the other music may be found in the current LP catalogs.

Ravel: Alborada del Gracioso. And **Liszt: Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104.** One side, and **Scarlatti: Sonata in E, L. 23 ("Cortegi").** And **Scarlatti: Sonata in D minor, L. 413 ("Pastorale").** Dinu Lipatti (piano). 1-10" disc (*C-ML-2216) \$4.

Collectors of the recordings of the late Dinu Lipatti, whose untimely death occurred in 1950 just prior to his planned American concert tour, will be very sorry to learn that the present disc contains the last available recordings by this truly great artist. These recordings were made in London in 1946, 1947 and 1948.

Piano Music of Spain. Leonard Pennario (piano). 1-12" disc (*CL-P-8190) \$5.70.

CONTENTS: *Ritual Fire Dance, Andaluza, Dance of the Miller's Wife* (Falla); *The Maiden and the Nightingale, Playera* (Granados); *Seguidilla, Sevilla, Tango in D* (Albéniz); *El Vito* (Infante).

Granados: (12) Spanish Dances. José Echaniz (piano). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5181) \$5.95.

This pair of discs contain a wealth of Spanish keyboard music played by two fine pianists and nicely recorded by Capitol and Westminster.

Schumann: Carnaval, Op. 9. One side, and
Mozart: Sonata No. 14 in C minor, K. 457 and
Mozart: Sonata No. 15 in C, K. 545. Walter
 Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4772)
 \$5.95.

Walter Gieseking has a large following amongst American music lovers. Each new release is greeted with rare enthusiasm by his devotees. We see no reason why the present disc should be any exception.

VIOLIN



Bach: (6) Sonatas for Violin Solo. Jascha Heifetz (violin). 3-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6105) \$17.16.

Bach: (6) Sonatas for Violin Solo. Ralph Schroeder (violin). 3-12" discs in album (*C-SL-189) \$17.85.

There is no question about this one! Heifetz wins by a big margin. The German violinist, Ralph Schroeder, is not in Mr. Heifetz's class. The interest in the Schroeder recording is that he uses a curved bow similar to the one used in Bach's time which permits the artist to play several notes at one time. This is a novelty to present day listeners but it is not enough to sway our opinion as to the desirability of his version over Mr. Heifetz's.

Sarasate: Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20, No. 1. One side, and **Paganini:** Perpetual Motion, Op. 11. And **Nováček:** Perpetual Motion. Michael Rabin (violin) with the Columbia Symphony Orchestra conducted by Donald Voorhees. 1-10" disc (*C-AAL-38) \$2.85.

On this attractive little LP disc Columbia has made available some highly exciting violin music at a very modest price.

BAND



Waltzes for Band. Deutschmeister Kapelle conducted by Julius Hermann. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3005) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Emperor Waltz, Schatz Waltz (Strauss); Badner Madln' (Komzak); Wiener Madln' (Ziehrer).

Those of us who can remember the German bands that used to play in the beer gardens which flourished in the German communities of our country before and about the turn of the century will listen to this record with fond memories of the simple and pleasant life that has entirely vanished—a time when the whole family could enjoy a summer evening and only make a small dent in a five dollar bill.

We don't remember ever having heard a band of the high quality of the Deutschmeister Kapelle, but the idea is the same.

HARPSICHORD



Bach: (6) French Suites. Isolde Ahlgrimm (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4746) \$5.95.

Scarlatti: (12) Sonatas for Harpsichord (Vol. V). Fernando Valenti (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5205) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Sonatas in C minor, L. 407; C, L. 155; G, L. 129; E, L. 375; E minor, L. 376; G, L. 86; E minor, L. 325; B-flat, L. 327; C, L. 218; G, L. 84; C, L. 457; G, L. 487.

The distinguished Austrian harpsichordist, Isolde Ahlgrimm, who with her husband, Dr. E. F. Fiala, founded the famous "Concerts for Connoisseurs and Amateurs" in Vienna some fifteen years or more ago, is the very able artist on the first disc listed above. Miss Ahlgrimm uses an instrument similar to one that Bach owned himself. It is a pedestal harpsichord: one harpsichord on legs is mounted over one that rests on the ground and the one on the ground has large keys that are manipulated with the feet. Such an instrument permits Bach's music to be performed just as it was written. . . . The second disc is the fifth in a series of recordings of Scarlatti's Sonatas that Mr. Valenti began some time ago; these recordings, by the way, have received most enthusiastic praise from music critics everywhere.

DICTION



Temperance Lecture. W. C. Fields, with musical accompaniments. 1-10" disc (*JAY-WCF-1) \$4.

This disc is an enigma, for we cannot vouch for its complete authenticity. Neither the jacket nor the label states that this actually is W. C. Fields speaking. The jacket has a photo of Fields and bears the inscription: "W. C. Fields Temperance Lecture." But the "W. C. Fields" is carefully placed over the picture, so that it might only describe the picture itself; or one might infer that this is the famous Fields' Lecture, although not necessarily read by Fields, himself. In all fairness, however, neither is there any statement that this is not Fields.

The disc is divided into six bands, and four of them contain the Temperance Lecture; the last two contain his description of how he was nearly poisoned when he stopped in the middle of the Mojave Desert on election day and had to drink a glass of water, with no olives, cherries or formaldehyde in it. Robert Lewis Taylor, in his wonderful book *W. C. Fields: His Follies & Fortunes* (Doubleday, New York, 1949), reports that Mr. Fields actually did make "an album of records, having to do mainly with the calamities which had attended his mistakenly drinking a glass of water." But nowhere can we find evidence that Fields actually did record his Temperance Lecture (although it was filmed; could

this be the sound track of the film? It doesn't sound like it).

So kudos or scallions to Jay Records, depending on whether this is or is not Fields; and a slap on the wrist, anyway, for an all time low in packaging.

J.

Shakespeare: Julius Caesar (Dramatic Highlights from the MGM sound track). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3033) \$4.85.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

Mark Antony	Marlon Brando
Brutus	James Mason
Cassius	John Gielgud
Julius Caesar	Louis Calhern
Casca	Edmond O'Brien
Calpurnia	Greer Garson
Portia	Deborah Kerr

John Houseman has selected the most important sections of the sound tract from M-G-M's great motion picture *Julius Caesar* and has joined them together with short but illuminating remarks so that the whole story of Shakespeare's play may be followed very easily. Mr. Houseman has done an excellent job and so whether you have seen the picture or not this fine recording should be quite intelligible.

Students and lovers of the works of the greatest writer in the English language should find the present recording highly satisfactory.

MISCELLANEOUS



(4) **Centuries of Polish Music.** Paul Matthen (bass); Collegium Musicum of New York conducted by Fritz Rikko; and Choirs and Instrumental Ensembles of Poland. 1-12" disc (*VAN-VRS-6017) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Mielczewski: Concerto for solo bass, two violins and harpsichord continuo ("Deus in nomine tuo"); Janiewicz—arr. Panufnik: Divertimento for String Orchestra; Jarzelski: Concerto for (3) violins and bass continuo ("Nova Casa"); Wacław of Szamotul: Juz sie szmierzcha (A Prayer for Children Going to Sleep); Gomolka: Siedzak po niskich brzegach babilonskiej wody (Psalm 136: "By the Rivers of Babylon"); Gomolka: Klasyczny rekoma ("Let us applaud"); Szarzynski: Sonata for (2) violins and organ.

It is impossible properly to review this outstanding recording in this space available. Although it will be of prime interest to musicologists, we want our readers to know that it is available and that with this LP disc there is an excellent 12-page booklet outlining the attempt that is being made to show the development of Polish music during the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Coloseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoterie, FEST—Fest, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—Ol'seau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urana, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP \$31/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.

The New Records

A BULLETIN FOR THOSE INTERESTED IN RECORDED MUSIC

Issued Monthly by

H. ROYER SMITH COMPANY

"The World's Record Shop"

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FEBRUARY, 1954

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WITH this issue the twenty-first volume of THE NEW RECORDS is completed. We are glad to report that interest in recorded music is at its all time high. The advent of the LP record gave it a great boost and the coming of high fidelity reproducing instruments and high fidelity records has further intensified it. To meet the great demand more and more records are being issued by more and more publishers and we are having greater difficulty in finding space for reviews of them. We try to give full reviews to the more important items and brief mention of the others. Our primary aim is to keep our readers advised of the availability of all of the new recordings in the classical field. Last month we reviewed ninety recordings which we believe is the largest number we have ever covered in one issue. It was not so many years ago when the average would be between twenty and twenty-five. This gives us some idea of how the interest in recorded music has increased in the last several years.

* * *

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music
(2nd Supplement). By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. xxii + 262 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$9.25.

The second supplement to the *World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music* has been eagerly awaited by record collectors the world over, and we do not think they will be disappointed, now that it has arrived. (Owners of the *Encyclopaedia* will recall that the first supplement was bound into the first volume, so that actually this is the first separately bound supplement). This volume is easily as thorough and as workmanlike as was the former one, and readers are referred to our August 1952 issue for a description of the WERM

Messrs. Clough and Cuming take great pains to identify the speed and groove size at which discs are recorded; but they make no effort to indicate whether a "45" rpm record is an Extended Play disc or not. However, letter prefixes are carefully indicated in giving catalog numbers of records, so that collectors familiar with American numbering systems will have little trouble, we think, in determining speeds.

Nearly ten pages are devoted to errata discovered in WERM. The dates covered by the second supplement are from the middle of 1951 through 1952, and although it is a most desirable volume for those who own WERM, the work will stand alone as a valuable reference work.

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music (with 1st Supplement bound into it) is still available; the price is \$17.50. If your local dealer cannot supply either of these volumes, orders addressed to the publishers of this bulletin will be promptly filled; the prices include postage to any point in U. S. A.

* * *

Last month we reviewed a recording entitled *Temperance Lecture* by W. C. Fields (*JAY-WCF-1, \$4) and we stated that we could not vouch for its complete authenticity due to the complete lack of notes on the jacket cover. An alert reader took us to task about this, and has sent us a 78 rpm album issued by Variety Records, Inc., which proves to be the source of the LP disc.

We are, therefore, very happy to be able to assure our readers that it is, indeed, Mr. Fields on the Jay record, and those of us who recall him with nostalgia may add this disc to our libraries with pleasure. May we hope that Jay Records will not again release a disc completely *sans* notes?

RENEWALS

A large majority of subscriptions end with this issue—if yours does, please return the enclosed blank promptly in order that you may not miss any issues. If your subscription still has some months to run, we will extend it for an additional twelve months upon receipt of your renewal at this time. Each year we send renewal blanks to everyone with the February issue (the last number in the volume) and in March we check the subscription list and drop those whose subscriptions have expired during the last year and who have not renewed them.

BACK COPIES

We are continually receiving requests for back copies of **THE NEW RECORDS**. Most of the issues published during the last twenty-one years are available. The price is 10c each. A file of all of the available issues (at least 150 copies) is \$5. These prices are postpaid within U.S.A.

NOTE: Those persons interested in recent recordings only may secure all of the issues of the last three years beginning February 1951 (36 copies) at the special price of \$2 (postpaid within U.S.A.).

ORCHESTRA



Harris: Symphony No. 3. One side, and **Hanson: Symphony No. 4.** Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40004) \$5.45.

Cowell: Symphony No. 4. One side, and **Riegger: New Dance.** And **Hovhaness: Concerto No. 1 for Orchestra** ("Arevakal"). Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40005) \$5.45.

Americana for Solo Winds and String Orchestra. Eastman-Rochester Symphony Orchestra conducted by Howard Hanson. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40003) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *The Winter's Past* (Barlow); *Soliloquy for Flute and Strings* (Rogers); *Quiet City* (Copland); *Night Soliloquy* (Kennan); *Serenade for Clarinet and Strings* (Keller); *Serenade for Flute, Strings and Harp* (Hanson); *Pastorale for Oboe, Strings and Harp* (Hanson).

Much praise has been extended to Mercury in these columns for the general level of excellence of their Olympian (50,000) Series. Of the two dozen releases not one is a poor reproduction, and all are

respectable interpretations and performances; some are outstanding. The difference between their 50,000 Olympian and their 40,000 Golden Lyre series is 50c, and nothing else. The same quality of recording and pressing is here, and the music is performed by a fine American ensemble. These three discs represent volumes 4, 5, and 6 of the American Music Festival Series which Mercury is offering, and we would imagine that Mercury is issuing what may well turn out to be the most representative recordings of the best contemporary American music. No other company is doing any better in this respect—that is for certain; and no man is more sincere or devoted to the cause than Howard Hanson. After hearing these three discs, one could offer little but praise for the efforts and for the results. The music is good, worth hearing, something to be proud of as coming from our land; and the performances and reproduction are of the finest; even the record surfaces are good.

We could consume several of these pages describing the music presented on these discs, but briefly we will state it this way: the three symphonies are each among the best works in that form by the respective composers. Hanson's *Symphony No. 4* is in many ways a better work than his more popular *No. 2 "Romantic."* Roy Harris' *Third* is a single movement work in five sections, and sustains interest admirably (this performance is notably effective). Henry Cowell's *Fourth* struck us as the best thing we ever heard of his, or at least the most appealing; it is a work of magnificent sonorities and interesting material. None of these works is too long or drawn out. The shorter works for solo winds and string orchestra by the six composers as listed above are lovely gems, every one of them. One could not prefer the *Night Soliloquy* over *The Winter's Past*, nor choose Rogers' *Soliloquy* above *Quiet City*; each work is a minor masterpiece. No single disc of American music ever gave us more real pleasure than any or all of these three, and we recommend them heartily.

S.

Scriabin: Poem of Ecstasy, Op. 54. One side, and **Liszt: Les Préludes** (Symphonic Poem No. 3). Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Pierre Monteux. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1775) \$5.72.

Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* appeared recently in a new version recorded with brilliant fidelity, and found favor in these columns (TNR November 1953). That performance by the New York Philharmonic under Dimitri Mitropoulos was found to have breadth and brilliance; the present reading by Monteux has breadth and more warmth with less brilliance. Monteux's performance is characteristically rounded and relaxed, with less of the tautness one finds in Mitropoulos' reading. Which style benefits the music more is beyond our power to determine; both these performances are mighty good, even though they are somewhat different. We think Mitropoulos is a little more interesting and exciting and the music

more sharply defined; but trumpeter Roger Voisin and Monteux offer a reading of such smoothness that it is most convincing.

Mitropoulos's disc (*C-ML-4731) is coupled with Scriabin's *Poem of Fire*, a more logical coupling than the present disc if you are interested in the music of Scriabin. As for Monteux's reading of the Liszt *Les Preludes*, it is a sound and idiomatic performance with a nice romantic bloom that does not indulge in any excesses. There are other LP's of this work that are about equal, except possibly for reproduction, as this is a very recent example of Victor's "New Orthophonic" process. The classic reading of *Les Preludes* is, of course, the old Mengelberg-Concertgebouw, now reissued on an LP. It is not of the high fidelity type; but as an example of how much can be squeezed out of the score, with generous excesses of every sort, nothing ever exceeded it. We might remark that it is nice to have a record of Monteux conducting the great Boston Orchestra and hope there will be some more discs of this combination in the future. S.

Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1. One side, and

Enesco: Roumanian Rhapsody No. 2. Leopold Stokowski and his Symphony Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*V-LRM-7043) \$2.99.

Stokowski gives these pleasing little pieces fussy and labored performances that changes their whole character. One would think that he was directing a massive movement from some great symphony when he really has before him the score of a melodic little orchestral piece of unique charm but not in any sense profound.



CONCERTO

Beethoven: (5) Concerti for Piano and Orchestra.

Wilhelm Kempff (piano) with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Paul van Kempen. 3-12" discs in album (*D-DX-125) \$17.55.

CONTENTS: Concerto No. 1 in C, Op. 15; Concerto No. 2 in B-flat, Op. 19; Concerto No. 3 in C minor, Op. 37; Concerto No. 4 in G, Op. 58. Concerto No. 5 in E-flat, Op. 72 ("Emperor").

Of all the complete collections issued on LP, this one is the best and least controversial. It would be foolish to deny that separate recordings of the individual concertos are not excellent and, to some collectors, even preferable. And there are certainly many record collectors who, for one reason or another, would prefer to have these five concertos in individual recordings of their own choice: Badura-Skoda in the First, Backhaus in the Second, and so on. And there are, at this date, many who must do just that, for they already own several of the concertos on LP. But such considerations aside, it remains that taking all five of the masterpieces at one time, this recording of them is a project that commands the deepest respect. Wilhelm Kempff is

admittedly the greatest living interpreter of the piano music of Beethoven. The printed notes on the concertos which appear with this set are by Kempff, and from them one can quickly realize that Kempff is a dedicated artist to the music of the Titan. His notes, though brief and non-analytical, are a joy to read. These interpretive notes are given an appreciation by Louis Untermeyer, whose foreword precedes them.

While listening to these performances one is aware that the personality of the performer has much to do with the results we hear. For once, this is not an intrusion—rather it enhances each concerto and unifies the whole group. Kempff has such a devotion to this music that he communicates the Beethoven idiom as few others could hope to. At no time is one listening to a virtuoso display of piano playing, or to a superficial interpretation of any movement. There is a justness about these performances that defies description; it is possible to listen, at one sitting, to any several of these works and be completely carried away by the music.

Decca has put the five concertos on three LP discs, thus making this a very economical set for the pur-chaser. The reproduction is superb, with a true piano tone and good orchestral balance. The Berlin Philharmonic under van Kempen supplies excellent accompaniments. In all respects, this is a most praise-worthy album.

S.

Mozart: Concerto No. 1 in G, K. 313. One side, and **Mozart: Concerto No. 2 in D, K. 314.** Camillo Wanausek (flute) with the Pro Musica Chamber Orchestra (Vienna) conducted by Hans Swarowsky. 1-12" disc (*VX-PL-8130) \$5.95.

Mozart—arr. Fischer: Concerto in E-flat, K. 447.

One side, and **Boccherini: Concerto in B-flat.** Janos Starker (violoncello) with the Castle Hill Festival Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-579) \$5.95.

As the Mozart Concertos for flute K. 313 and 314 plus the Boccherini Concerto are all represented in the catalog with adequate recordings, the item of interest is the remaining work—a transcription of the well-beloved Mozart Concerto for Horn K. 447 for violoncello. We found it quite pleasing; Janos Starker does a fine job and is well supported by the Castle Hill Festival Orchestra under Maximilian Pilzer.

Poulenc: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra.

Annette Haas-Hamburger (piano) with l'Orches-tre de l'Association des Concerts Pasdeloup con-ducted by Pierre Dervaux. One side, and **Milhaud: Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano.** Jaques Perrenin (violin), Ulysse Delecluze (clarinet) and Annette Haas-Hamburger (piano). And

Poulenc: (3) Pieces pour le Piano. Annette Haas-Hamburger (piano). 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-563) \$5.95.

Of the three selections on this LP disc, the least

ostentatious, the (3) *Pieces pour le Piano* of Poulenc, which were used to complete the second side, are to our mind of most musical worth. Poulenc is a master of pieces in miniature; and his *Improvisation, Humoresque* and *Valse* that make up this little work are interesting and quite delightful. As for his *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* and Milhaud's *Suite for Violin, Clarinet and Piano* we certainly cannot get very much excited about them. The first movement of the Concerto seems to promise something that does not come about, and Milhaud's Suite reminds one of a mediocre piece of chamber music from the 18th century—a period when works of this character were turned out by the hundreds.

Grieg: Concerto in A minor, Op. 16. Friedrich Wuehrer (piano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Boehm. One side, and **Rachmaninoff: Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43.** Julian von Karolyi (piano) with the Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin conducted by Arthur Rother. 1-12" disc (*URRRS-7-15) \$3.50.

Grieg: Concerto in A minor, Op. 16. One side, and **Mendelssohn: Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 25.** Ania Dorfmann (piano) with the Robin Hood Dell Orchestra (Philadelphia) conducted by Erich Leinsdorf. 1-12" disc (*V-LBC-1043) \$2.98.

Urania and RCA Victor have both issued recordings of Grieg's *Concerto in A minor, Op. 16* in their lower priced series. We think that the RCA Victor disc is a particularly fine value. The coupling is most attractive and the reproduction is superior to that on the Urania record.



CHORAL

Gabrieli: (4) Motets from "Symphoniae Sacrae" (Books I & II). Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society with Brass Choir conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth, with Daniel Pinkham (organ). 1-10" disc (*CAMBRIDGE CRS-201) \$4.

CONTENTS: *In ecclesiis benedicte Domino; Benedictus; O Jesu mi dulcissime; Jubilate Deo.*

Chansons and Motets. Harvard Glee Club and the Radcliffe Choral Society conducted by G. Wallace Woodworth, with Daniel Pinkham (organ). 1-10" disc (*CAMBRIDGE CRS-202) \$4.

CONTENTS: *Mon Coeur se Recommande à Vous* (Lassus); *Nous Voyons que les Hommes* (Arcadelt); *Petite Nymfe Folatre* (Regnard); *Bonjour, mon Coeur* (Lassus); (3) *Chansons de Charles d'Orléans* (Debussy); (4) *Motets* (Preger) *Missa "O Admirabile Commercium"*—*Benedictus* (Palestrina); *Ave verum Corpus*, K. 618 (Mozart); *Miserere* (Allegri).

One can safely state that at least one and preferably both of these discs should be in every serious

record collection. Anyone interested in the development of music should have more than a nodding acquaintance with Giovanni Gabrieli who, as organist of the famous San Marco church in Venice, had the imagination and courage to write some of the most glorious and, for the period in which he lived, the most fantastic music one could hope to hear. Gabrieli, then, is represented by four Motets, taken from some *Symphoniae Sacrae* written in 1597 and 1615. The first of these, *In ecclesiis benedicte Domino*, is a monumental work full of stunning effects and complete with brass ensemble and organ. The famous antiphonal effects (a Venetian specialty) are very much in evidence and the whole affair is very wonderful. The ensuing *Benedictus* (for three choirs) demonstrates further aspects of this extremely novel and interesting style of writing. *O Jesu mi dulcissime* is something a little different. It is described by G. Wallace Woodworth as "not only a motet for double choir and a Sacred Symphony with basso continuo, but also a chromatic madrigal with a sacred text." You must hear this one to believe it. The final one, *Jubilate Deo*, is a rousing paean that is superb in its feeling and imagery.

The disc of *Motets and Chansons* is a little more conventional. There is the *Ave verum Corpus* of Mozart, the celebrated *Miserere* of Allegri and, in addition to some Orlandus Lassus, three chansons by, of all people, Claude Debussy. This writer found the Debussy items not too inspired. *Four Motets*, written for the Harvard and Radcliffe groups by Leo Preger in 1937, also seem contrived.

The recording on these two discs is worthy of special comment. It ranks with the very best choral sound yet achieved; and the brass instruments, along with the organ, are captured with remarkable fidelity. Some of the pedal notes of the organ literally shake the floor. By all means do not miss the Gabrieli disc; the other is also highly recommended, the strictures concerning Messrs. Debussy and Preger being, of course, personal reaction only. W.

Schönberg: The Gurre-Lieder (complete). (Sung in German). Ethel Semser (soprano); Nell Tangerman (mezzo-soprano); Richard Lewis, Ferry Gruber (tenors); John Riley (bass); Morris Gesell (speaker); Chorus and Orchestra of the New Symphony Society of Paris conducted by René Leibowitz. 3-12" discs in album (*HS-HSL-100) \$18.50.

In the splendid forty-page booklet which is supplied with this set will be found elaborate notes by René Leibowitz. His third sentence says, "The *Gurre-Lieder* constitute both the final synthesis of the musical tradition of the Nineteenth Century and the beginning of a new world of sound which was to become the specific acquisition of the musical activity of the Twentieth Century."

The *Gurre-Lieder* is not only a work of vast proportions, it is a significant landmark in the evolution

of musical composition. It employs an exceptionally large group of performers. Besides the six soloists, there are three four-part Men's Choruses, an eight-part Mixed Chorus, and over 140 instrumentalists in the orchestra. The work is a series of dramatic pieces within an organized symphonic structure, with a continuity that ties the work together. The poem of Jacobson is based on a saga concerning Waldemar the First, who ruled in Denmark in the 12th Century. The original Danish text is in a German translation by Robert Franz Arnold. An English translation (by D. Miller Craig) will keep you informed as to what is going on.

Recorded during September and October of 1953 in the Apollo Theater in Paris, this set represents exceptional care and thoughtfulness in preparation. Engineering problems were studied for three months and meticulous care was given to microphone placement and such matters. The Telefunken microphone was used throughout. One can offer nothing but praise for the results of this great undertaking. It is all one could hope for in single-channel recording, considering the size of the performing groups.

Not only is this a worthy engineering feat; it is also an artistic masterpiece. René Leibowitz, a champion of Schönberg's music, has performed this great work with surpassing insight and beauty. He realizes the individual effects and also creates an atmosphere of the whole canvas which is quite remarkable. As the work is scored largely for solo voice, the soloists are of prime importance, and each does beautiful work in this performance. Richard Lewis and Ethel Semser, the principals, are excellent and project their parts with beauty of tone and deep interpretive ability. The voices are all recorded magnificently. We admit to hearing this (all the way through) for the first time, and the impression made was indeed a deep one. One is not impressed with the size and grandeur of the work so much as with the continual beauty and drama. It is in no sense modern music that is difficult to understand. We found it immediately accessible, for it is built on romantic traditions. We can recommend it as a wonderful and stimulating listening experience.

RCA Victor recently reissued this work on LP (*V-LCT-6012, \$11.44) in a performance made at a concert when Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra gave it its premiere performances in America. As this dates back to the earliest days of electrical recording, there is much to be desired from a technical standpoint. Stokowski achieves some magnificent effects, notably in the more atmospheric passages; but the work as a whole, and the climaxes in particular, cannot be compared to the present Haydn Society effort. It is unfair even to compare them. As a memento of the occasion, Stokowski's set may please a few; but anyone who really wants to experience this monumental music will necessarily turn to the new set. We believe those who venture to hear this work all the way

through will be pleased with the beauty of the music, thrilled by the impact it makes and feel highly rewarded as well as grateful for this superb recording.

S.

Chant Gregorien. Choer des Moines de l'Abbaye St. Pierre de Solesmes conducted by Dom Joseph Gajard O.S.B. 5-12" discs in album (*L-LLA-14) \$29.75.

For those interested in Gregorian Chant the present album is one of the most important releases to be made in many years. It contains recordings made by the monastic choir of the Abbey of Solesmes, the most famous exponents of Gregorian Chant in the world. With these records is a musically illustrated 36-page booklet of notes by the choir's present director, Dom Joseph Gajard. Dom Gajard's original notes were in French and the English translation that accompanies the present records was made by Justine Bayard Ward.

From time to time we have reviewed recordings of Gregorian Chants, but we have never seen an album so interesting nor so illuminating as the one released by London this month.

Bach: Cantata No. 76 ("Die Himmel erzählen"). (Sung in German). Magda Laszlo (soprano), Hilde Roessel-Majdan (contralto), Petre Munteanu (tenor), Richard Standen (bass), Vienna Akademiechor and Orchestra of the Vienna State Opera conducted by Hermann Scherchen. 1-12" disc (*WEST-WL-5201) \$5.95.

Bach: Missa Brevis No. 4 in G. One and one-half sides, and **Bach: Sanctus No. 4 in G.** Agnes Giebel (soprano), Lotte Wolf-Matthaeus (alto), Werner Hohmann (tenor), Franz Kelch (bass), The Swabian Choral Singers and the Tonstudio Orchestra (Stuttgart) conducted by Hans Grischkat. 1-12" disc (*REN-X-47) \$5.95.

Bach: Cantata No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"). And **Bach: Cantata No. 208**—Sheep May Safely Graze. And **Bach: Cantata No. 68**—My Heart Ever Faithful. (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Peter Gellhorn. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 82** ("Ich habe genug"). (Sung in German). Hans Hotter (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anthony Bernard. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4792) \$5.95.

Heading this list is the Westminster disc, directed by Dr. Hermann Scherchen. There are approximately nine of the Cantatas recorded under his direction, and each is, in its way, a veritable gem. This particular one has not been recorded previously and is of interest on two counts. First, it is the second of two Cantatas (excluding the "trial cantata") that Bach wrote on assuming the post as cantor of the St. Thomas Church at Leipzig. Second, Bach was a relatively young man (thirty-eight) when he wrote it, yet it is a surprisingly mature work. It

is sung here in stunning fashion, played beautifully and directed in a musicianly manner by the redoubtable Herr Doktor Scherchen.

The second disc listed above is the fourth in a series and completes, insofar as this writer has been able to determine, the *Missae breves* and *Sancti Bach* wrote. The former were composed for Count Franz Anton von Sporck, a most unusual nobleman and, one might add, the sort this world could use in this day and age. These "short masses," consisting of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* only, were, in large part, reworkings of some earlier Cantatas. This record, like the others in the series, is ably sung by the soloists and the Swabian Choral Singers directed by Hans Grischkat.

There remains the Columbia disc featuring the well known voices of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Hans Hotter. The former's singing of the *Cantata No. 51* is a vocal *tour-de-force* but not, in this writer's opinion, good Bach. The arias from the other Cantatas are well known and sung acceptably. Hans Hotter does yeoman work in the *Cantata No. 82*; but it has been recorded twice before, and Hotter has little that is new to offer interpretively.

The recording of all three discs is excellent, and texts and notes are supplied in all instances. W.

Gregorian Chants (Vol. 3). Benedictine Monks of St. Wandrille de Fontenelle directed by Dom Lucien David. 1-12" disc (*PE-SPL-576) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *Mass of the Immaculate Conception*; *Vox turturis*; *Nolite timere*; *Lumen hilare*; *Wandregisilus*; *Annue*, *Christe*; *Beata Wandregisili*; *Salve*, *virilis pectoris*; *Regem cui omnia vivunt*; *Credo quod Redemptor*; *Miserere et parce*; *Recordare*, *Virgo Mater*; *Mandatum*; *Super flumina*; *Cantus Mariales*.

Gregorian Masses. Pius X Choir of the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart directed by Mother Josephine Morgan, R.S.C.J. 1-10" disc (*GIOA-PX-4) \$4.75.

CONTENTS: *Mass No. 12 "Pater Cuncta"*; *Mass No. 17 (On Sundays of Advent & Lent)*; *Mass No. 5 "Kyrie magnae Deus potentiae"*; *Mass No. 18 (On Weekdays of Advent & Lent)*.

Here are two quite different records for those interested in Gregorian Chant. The first was made by the monks from the monastery of St. Wandrille de Fontenelle. These men are not professional singers. The selections are sung just as they sing them from time to time in the performance of their duties. They have the air of the monastery about them and hold for the listener a brief introduction to the monastic way of life . . . The second disc was recorded by a choir of girl students from the Pius X School of Liturgical Music of the Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, New York. This disc shows what can be done in teaching young persons to appreciate and take part in the liturgical music of the Roman Catholic Church.

CHAMBER MUSIC



Vivaldi: Concerto for (5) Instruments in D ("*La Pastorella*"). And **Vivaldi: Sonata for Flute, Bassoon and Harpsichord in A minor**. One side, and **Vivaldi: Concerto for Flute, Oboe and Bassoon in G minor**. And **Vivaldi: Sonata for Oboe and Harpsichord in C minor**. And **Vivaldi: Concerto for (4) Instruments in F**. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute); Pierre Pierlot (oboe); Robert Gendre (violin); Paul Hongne (bassoon); and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-82) \$5.95.

Vivaldi: Concerto for Flute, Oboe, Violin, Bassoon and Figured Bass in G minor. And **Vivaldi: Sonata for Flute and Figured Bass in D minor**. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute), Robert Gendre (violin); Pierre Pierlot (oboe), Paul Hongne (bassoon), and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). One side, and **Bach: Suite for Flute and Figured Bass in C minor**. Jean-Pierre Rampal (flute) and Robert Veyron-Lacroix (harpsichord). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-80) \$5.95.

One of the better things that has come from all the recording activity occasioned by the advent of tape recording and LP discs is the attention being paid to some of the older composers whose genuine merit and real charm were often obscured by the more accessible music of their successors. The foregoing is a somewhat roundabout way of saying that here is some Vivaldi that is as utterly charming and beautiful music as one could ever expect to hear. The great delight derived from these selections lies, too, in knowing that they have been prepared and "realized" in a scholarly and musicianly fashion. The participating artists, it goes without saying, are superb technicians and musicians.

For a good many years, in fact since the time of Bach, "editors" (save the mark!) have given posterity a very much distorted version of the great Italian baroque master. They have, as the jacket notes very mildly put it, "taken liberties." All of the music on these two discs is recorded for the first time and will, in all probability, be new to most listeners. It is almost futile to try to describe the many glories of the little "cyclical concerto-sonatas" (a direct forerunner of the modern sonata) contained on three of the four sides of these two records. One "sonata" stands out particularly, however, for an exquisite melody in the third movement. It is the *largo cantabile* from the *Sonata for flute and bassoon in A Minor*. This purely Italianate melody with its cute Alberti bass is, in itself, worth the price of the disc; and yet, there are included four other works, every one a sheer delight. The second disc contains the only sonata for flute ("Sonata a flauto traverso del Signor Antonio Vivaldi" as the Italians so gracefully put it) Vivaldi ever wrote, along with a wonderful "concerto" for

three woodwinds, violin and figured bass.

In the general excitement about Vivaldi we almost overlooked the *Suite for Flute* by the redoubtable Johann Sebastian Bach. This is an interesting work in that no one is sure just for what instrument or group of instruments it might have been written. The "realization" for flute and harpsichord, made here by M. Veyron-Lacroix, however, is amply justified.

Technically, the two discs are representative of the finest sound being offered and, when one considers all the care that has been lavished on them from every conceivable angle, they must be regarded as best buys in this or any year. W.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 1 in D, Op. 12, No. 1.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9640) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 2 in A, Op. 12, No. 2. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 10 in G, Op. 96.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9641) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"). One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 8 in G, Op. 30, No. 3.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9642) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 12, No. 3. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 6 in A, Op. 30, No. 1.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9643) \$5.85.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23. One side, and **Beethoven: Sonata No. 7 in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2.** Joseph Fuchs (violin) and Artur Balsam (piano). 1-12" disc (*D-DL-9644) \$5.85.

NOTE: All of the above were reviewed in our January 1953 issue.

Decca has released the "unlimited" editions this month of the Beethoven Sonatas for Violin and Piano which were released in January 1953 in a limited edition. Collectors may now compare the versions of Messrs. Fuchs and Balsam with those of Heifetz and Bay (*V-LM-6701) reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

Some dealers still have a few copies of the Decca Limited Edition of these Sonatas (*D-DX-150, \$25) which is quite a bargain at the price; these are housed in a substantial album with a booklet containing complete miniature scores.

Beethoven: (10) Sonatas for Violin and Piano. Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). 5-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6701) \$28.60.

CONTENTS: Sonatas No. 1 in D, Op. 12, No. 1; No. 2 in A, Op. 12, No. 2; No. 3 in E-flat, Op. 12, No. 3; No. 4 in A minor, Op. 23; No. 5 in F, Op. 24 ("Spring"); No. 6 in A, Op. 30, No. 1; No. 7

in C minor, Op. 30, No. 2; No. 8 in G, Op. 30, No. 3; No. 9 in A, Op. 47 ("Kreutzer") (with Moiseiwitsch, piano); No. 10 in G, Op. 96.

RCA Victor has taken Heifetz's recordings of five of these Beethoven Sonatas that have been made available as individual discs and added recordings of Nos. 3, 4, 6, 8 and 10 to make this monumental album. Here we have the sonatas played with a supreme technique and a high sense of refinement which is Heifetz's—perhaps a bit too much refinement for those bred in the European tradition. These folks may prefer the Decca recordings by Fuchs and Balsam. Perhaps they will feel that Fuchs goes deeper into the heart of the music, especially in the bigger sonatas, and comes out with more that one may really get a hold of. It may be that they will say that Heifetz keeps too much on the surface and glosses over some of the music that should be more deeply explored with profit to the listener. We do not feel that way at all. The beautiful music that Heifetz produces is enough for us.

OPERA



Thomas: Mignon (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus of Théâtre de la Monnaie (Brussels) and l'Orchestre National de Belgique conducted by Georges Sebastian. 3-12" discs in album (*L-LA-15) \$17.85.

Mignon	Genevieve Moizan (s)
Philine	Janine Micheau (s)
Wilhelm	Libero De Luca (t)
Lothario	Rene Bianco (bt)
Laërté	Robert Destain (t)

Ernest Newman once described Ambrois Thomas as "one of the masters of French operetta, with a certain gift for bigger things" and, on reading the phrase, this reviewer wondered just what the "certain gift" was. It is reasonable to assume one of the "bigger things" was *Mignon* but the "gift" does not seem too big, particularly when judged by this performance.

It is easy to say—the singers are poor, but that is not always the case. Genevieve Moizan, in the title role, has a first rate voice, but she does not suggest Goethe's little girl of "about twelve or thirteen." Her voice is far too mature, too knowing, for the part. Aside from this feature, she is excellent, singing the thrice familiar *Connais-tu le pays* in moving fashion. Philine, sung by Janine Micheau, is a more convincing characterization as well as a much easier one. The *Polonaise* is well sung, but the trills are weak, almost to the point of non-existence.

Of the male roles, Wilhelm Meister is the poorest sung. Libero de Luca does not have a really unpleasant voice, except when he comes to an aria (and he is bound to, in operas, occasionally); then he seems to get stage fright; his voice tightens up

and becomes affected with a wobble that is far from nice to hear. Lothario, as sung by Rene Bianco, is acceptable, as is Robert Destain's Laërté. The chorus is vivacious; the orchestra, under Georges Sebastian, plays vigorously.

Technically, the recording is uneven. All of it is affected with "tape echo" from both angles: that is, sometimes the echo is in advance of the music, sometimes after—could be the result of overlong storage of the tapes or the use of extremely fine groove pitch. There is also some very awkward tape splicing in evidence. One is a little surprised at London, who is usually very meticulous.

And really, someone should have checked the version the company sings against the version printed in the libretto—there are omissions and additions that are confusing. Finally, for reasons best known to M. de Luca and the Théâtre de la Monnaie, the first verse of the famous aria *Elle ne croyait pas* is omitted—just as well, perhaps, in view of the way in which he sings the second. W.

Milanov Sings. Zinka Milanov (soprano), with Margaret Roggero (mezzo-soprano) and Lubomir Vichegonov (bass), the Robert Shaw Chorale directed by Robert Shaw and the RCA Victor Orchestra conducted by Renato Cellini. 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1777) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *La Forza del Destino*—Son Giunta! Grazie, o Dio (recit.); Madre, pietosa Vergina (aria). *La Forza del Destino*—La Vergine degli angeli. *La Forza del Destino*—Pace, pace, mio Dio. *La Gioconda*—Suicidio! *Aïda*—Ritorna Vincitor. *Aïda*—O Patria mia. *Il Trovatore*—Tacea la notte placida. *Il Trovatore*—Timor di me? (recit.); D'amor sull'ali rosee (aria). *Cavalleria Rusticana*—Voi lo sapete.

The emergence of Zinka Milanov as, perhaps, the finest dramatic soprano of our day, is a singularly gratifying event. In her early years at the Metropolitan, Mme. Milanov was the possessor of a magnificent voice but was so erratic as regards pitch that she could make even the most casual listener uneasy. But now all reservations concerning her art may be cancelled; her artistry, control and sense of pitch are at once sure and exciting.

In this collection of arias and scenes from Italian opera (very intelligently chosen, by the way), Mme. Milanov moves from one triumph to another. One has remarked before, in these columns, that so often a singer makes a record of this style (i.e., a series of operatic arias) and the results are lamentable—as dull as dishwater. This is due almost entirely to the singer's being unable to realize effectively the character he or she is portraying. With Zinka Milanov there need be no fears. Her Leonoras (*Forza* and *Trovatore*) are sharply differentiated, as Verdi intended, while her *Gioconda* is a masterpiece of frustration, hate and desperation. The same superlatives may be applied to her *Aida* and *Santuzza*—superior conceptions, all.

In the *Forza del Destino* excerpts RCA Victor has gone all the way, supplying the chorus and an additional soloist in the person of Lubomir Vichegonov, in order properly to present the music. Vichegonov, who sings the part of Padre Guardiano, has a rich, sympathetic and expressive bass, and his singing becomes one of the outstanding features of a disc that is on an extraordinarily high vocal plane.

Much of the genuine musical merit of the record is due to Renato Cellini's fine direction. He does not miss a chance to heighten the drama, but never does he allow either the singers or his orchestra to get out of hand, as it were, and become bumptious or indulge in bad taste.

The recording is as fine as could be expected—the balance between singers and orchestra is well nigh perfect, and RCA's multiple microphone technique enables one actually to hear the music better than at a live performance. Don't miss this one, even if the music is thrice familiar. W.

Weber: Oberon (complete). (Sung in German). Soloists, Chorus and Symphony Orchestra of Suddeutscher Rundfunk conducted by Hans Mueller-Kray. 2-12" discs in album (*PE-SPL-575) \$12.50.

Oberon	Franz Fehringer (t)
Sir Huon	Karl Liebl (t)
Sherasmin	Robert Titze (bt)
Rezia	Helene Bader (s)
Fatima	Hanne Munch (ms)
Puck	Paula Bauer (c)
Mermaid	Friederike Sailer (s)

Weber's ill-fated *Oberon* receives its initial recorded performance with a cast of singers, a chorus and orchestra and a conductor, virtually all of whom are new to records.

Unfortunately, some of the singers are unequal to their tasks. This is particularly true of Helene Bader, the Rezia of the performance, whose singing of the mighty *Ozean, du Ungeheuer* is a travesty on Weber's intentions. In other parts of the score, where the music is not so cruelly demanding, she manages to hold her own, but not much more. The leading tenor role is sung by Karl Liebl who, while far from being a secure and able vocalist, achieves a degree of conviction with his passion and sincerity. Very effective is the prayer *Du der diese Prüfung schickst* and the *Von Jugend auf schön in Kampf und Streit* is also feelingly sung. The most attractive singer is Friederike Sailer, to whom falls one of the opera's most delightful moments, the exquisite barcarolle *O wie wagt es sich schön*. Both the music and the singing are enchanting. Curiously, the title role is not a particularly large one, and tenor Fehringer does satisfactorily as do the others in what may be considered the lesser roles.

Oberon bears a striking resemblance in its story to Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, both libretti having

been drawn from Weiland's *Oriental Fantasies*. The performance recorded by Period omits the spoken dialogue (*Oberon* is a *sing-spiel*) although for its only Metropolitan performances, recitatives were written by conductor Artur Bodansky. The cast for these productions included Althouse in the title role, Ponselle as Rezia and Martinelli as Huon. (How times have changed!)

Easily the star of this recording is the Sudeten Rundfunk Orchestra, whose brass section could well be the envy of many a more famous orchestra. These discs, while the sound is listenable, have a lot of "studio" noise (or could the recording have been made from a radio broadcast?). In all events, this is far from being a definitive *Oberon*. Notes and libretto are included.

W.

Saint-Saëns: Samson et Delila (complete). (Sung in French). Soloists, Chorus and Orchestra of the Paris Opera conducted by Louis Fourestier. 3-12" discs in album (*VX-PL-8323) \$17.85.

Delilah Hélène Bouvier (ms)
Samson José Luccioni (t)
Abimelech Charles Cambon (bt)
High Priest Paul Cabanel (bs)

It has always seemed strange to this reviewer that an opera (if the term may be used in this connection) as popular as *Samson et Delila* should have only one LP issue, and that a "dubbing" from an earlier 78 rpm recording; yet such is the case.

Saint-Saëns chief claim to fame is a mixed sort of work, part opera and part oratorio; part Saint-Saëns and part nearly everyone else Saint-Saëns heard in his long and active life. Yet, the piece has moments of undeniable grandeur (the opening scene, *Arettez, o mes frères*, is one) and sections of real sensuous beauty (the thrice familiar *Mon cœur s'ouvre à ta voix* is a prime example of this facet). Unfortunately, between these and several other passages of a similar nature, are arid wastes of mere note stringing that cause the attention to wander.

Luckily for all concerned the cast here is a strong one. José Luccioni is a fine, virile Samson who sings with feeling, beauty of tone and a sureness and conviction that are seldom encountered nowadays. He is fine in the last act (*Vois ma misère, hélas*) and excellent in his concerted numbers with Miss Bouvier. Hélène Bouvier, incidentally, is an opulent voiced Dalila who sings her way through the role with taste and style. Two other fine singers, baritone Cambon and basso Cabanel do very well indeed, especially the latter, who has a much "fatter" role.

The chorus and orchestra of the Paris Opera under Fourestier also do well but they suffer from poor recording. As mentioned before, this set is a "dubbing" and the quality of recorded sound, particularly as regards chorus and orchestra leaves much to be desired. The principals fare well, however, and most interest attaches to them in this instance.

For those who are *Samson et Delila* enthusiasts,

perhaps the present issue would be reasonably satisfactory; for others, a little better sounding version will make a more favorable impression. A French-English libretto is included.

W.

Giordano: Andrea Chénier (complete opera). (Sung in Italian). Gigli, Caniglia, Bechi, Simonato, Palombini, Huder, Tajo, Taddei, Paci, Zagonara, Conti, with Chorus and Orchestra of La Scala conducted by Oliviero de Fabritiis. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LCT-6014) \$11.44.

A new, imported and complete *Andrea Chenier* is welcome news this month, and that redoubtable trio—Maria Caniglia, Beniamino Gigli and Gino Bechi—are present to lend their distinguished services to the three principal roles.

Andrea Chenier is an unusually well-constructed opera. Its four tableaux are strongly knit and boast a musical flavor which is quite distinctive. There is a wealth of warm, impassioned Italian melody rising to climaxes that are often inspirational in quality. This is by far Giordano's best opera, a work that cannot be accused of dull pages or musical padding, which is more than can be truthfully said of the same composer's *Fedora*, *Siberia*, *Madama Sans-Gene*, and other works. *Andrea Chenier* gives an impression of great spontaneity and enthusiasm; of a composer who had something to say—and the saying is an able and workmanlike job.

Like Puccini's *Tosca*, the Giordano opera depends much on its three principal singers for successful realization. The present set is fortunate in this respect. Gigli sings the title-role with sensuously beautiful tone and authentic style. He is in much better voice than he was in the *Ballo in Maschera* set. This celebrated tenor sang the role of Chenier during his first season at the Metropolitan in 1921, in the company's first production of the opera, which had been intended as a vehicle for the stricken Caruso. Mr. Gigli, at that time, sang the music with a freshness of voice and a youthful brilliance that were delightful. We now hear him, in this album, 22 years later (recording took place in 1943), and find his art mellowed and matured, even though the climaxes have not the brilliance, abandon and resilience of earlier days. The first act *Improvviso* is a beautiful piece of singing and so is the last act *Come un bel di di Maggio*, sung with a caressing cantilena surely at the command of no other living tenor. The final duet, one of the most exhausting and demanding in Italian opera, finds Mr. Gigli without that little extra margin of brilliance and power, that ultimate thrust the music calls for. Nevertheless, he's bravely there in those cruel, final measures.

Maria Caniglia does some lovely singing as Maddalena di Coigny. Her's is a luscious, generous voice, and because of the lyric quality of the music, the singer's best is brought out. Her long monolog, *La Mamma Morta*, is a grand bit of *lirico spinto* singing, and her voice rises beautifully with Gigli's to the

soaring melodies of the second act duet, *Ora soave*.

It has been said that Gino Bechi's tones have often been likened to the great voice of Titta Ruffo. This is especially noticeable in this set, where Signor Bechi's powerful style and dark vocal-color are so admirably suited to Giordano's music. It is related that when Titta Ruffo first heard Bechi, he exclaimed, "An excellent likeness of me!"

The minor roles, of which *Chenier* boasts several, are all satisfactorily handled, and the orchestra under Oliviero de Fabritiis moves with eloquence and passion.

Reproduction is not quite up to today's high standards; yet, considering the superb performance, this set must be named first choice among available recordings of *Andrea Chenier*.

MAX DE SCHAUENSEE.

Bori as Manon and Mignon. Lucrezia Bori (soprano). 1-7" disc (ØV-ERAT-3) \$1.58.

CONTENTS: *Manon*—Adieu, notre petite table; Obéissons, quand leur voix appelle. *Mignon*—Connais-tu le pays?; Me voici dans son boudoir.

(4) Puccini Arias. Enrico Caruso (tenor). 1-7" disc (ØV-ERAT-5) \$1.58.

CONTENTS: *Tosca*—Recondita armonia; *Tosca*—E lucevan le stelle; *Bohème*—Che gelida manina; *Manon Lescaut*—Donna non vidi mai.

McCormack in Opera. John McCormack (tenor). 1-7" disc (ØV-ERAT-17) \$1.58.

CONTENTS: *Semele*—Oh Sleep! Why doest thou leave me?; *Lucia di Lammermoor*—Fra poco a me ricovero; *Bohème*—O soave fanciulla (with Bori); *Traviata*—Parigi, o cara (with Bori).

Ponselle as Norma. Rosa Ponselle (soprano). 1-7" disc (ØV-ERAT-19) \$1.58.

CONTENTS: *Norma*—Casta Diva & Mira, O Norma.

Four choice items from the "Treasury of Recorded Performances" this month which should delight the collector and prove instructive to the novice. RCA Victor is to be congratulated on its choice for its initial offering in this series, and it is to be hoped that more will be forthcoming.

We wonder whether the powers that be at RCA Victor had their tongues in their cheeks when they labelled this series "ERAT," which is Latin for "he (she) was."

Mascagni: Cavalleria Rusticana (complete). (Sung in Italian). Giannina Arangi-Lombardi (soprano); Maria Castagna (mezzo-soprano); Ida Mannarini (contralto); Antonio Melandri (tenor); Gino Lulli (baritone); La Scala Chorus and Milan Symphony Orchestra conducted by Cav. Lorenzo Molajoli. 2-12" discs in album (*C-EL-5) \$7.25.

Columbia continues to re-issue its old operatic series on LP discs and this time it is the early 1930

version of *Cavalleria Rusticana* that is resuscitated.

The cast will be familiar to old time record collectors; Arangi-Lombardi was one of the better dramatic sopranos of the time and her Santuzza is a good characterization. Melandri, a leather-lunged tenor, makes a satisfactory Turiddu. He has lots of voice but very little subtlety; however one doubts whether Turiddu was a particularly subtle fellow, so it really doesn't matter too much. Gino Lulli is a rousing, almost too much so, Alfio.

All these singers are native Italians, and they are able to bring a vitality to this performance that was exciting back in the early thirties when one had never heard microgroove quality. Now—well, to put it politely, the recording has aged, even though the performance still retains more than a modicum of its original exciting quality.

The other *Cavallerias* available now, Cetra's and the new RCA Victor one, to mention but two, make this one sound a little grotesque. There is price and sentiment only to recommend this one and, one fears, sentiment is not a very strong selling point in these days of emphasis on "High Fidelity." Better hear this one first.

W.



VOCAL

Irmgard Seefried Sings. (In German). Irmgard Seefried (soprano) accompanied by Erik Werba (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-7545) \$3.85.

CONTENTS: Weihnachtslieder, Op. 3, Nos. 1-6 (Cornelius); Das schlafende Jesukind (Wolf); Mariä Wiegenlied, Op. 76 (Reger); Rosamunde, Op. 26—Romanze (Schubert); Seligkeit (Schubert); Ave Maria (Schubert).

R. Strauss: (4) letzte Lieder. (Sung in German). Lisa della Casa (soprano) with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Böhm. 1-10" disc (*L-LD-9072) \$2.95.

CONTENTS: Beim Schlafengehen; September; Frühling; Im Abendrot.

Lieder by Peter Cornelius (1824-1874) are curiosities these days, so it is very nice indeed to have such a beautifully sung and well recorded version of the *Weihnachtslieder*; a set of six songs devoted to the various aspects of the Christmas scene. The words (Cornelius' own) are, and here one must judge from an English translation for Decca does not print the German texts on the jacket, on a high poetic and devotional plane, and the music matches the literary inspiration. Among the finest is the third, *Die Könige*, with its beautifully impassioned ending. The other side, devoted to songs by Reger, Wolf and Schubert, is equally well sung; and the material is much better known. Erik Werba is the able accompanist.

The Strauss disc might be considered the surprise

of the year—it certainly was to this reviewer, whose admiration for the late German Master has never been very great. But these *Vier letzte Lieder* are among the most beautiful, haunting, almost ecstatic songs written since Schubert. Their genesis is interesting; the first to be composed was *Im Abendrot*, sketched in 1946-47 and completed in 1948. *Frühling*, composed June/July 1948 and *Beim Schlafengehen* written a month later were second and third respectively. The last song, *September*, was ready by September 1948 and is Strauss' last composition, for within a year he was dead.

Autumnal the songs certainly are, but there is a combination of vitality and poetry about them that Strauss did not often achieve. They are exquisitely sung by a soprano with a very euphonious name, Lisa della Casa. Signora Casa, who sings with unerring accuracy, also manages to sing with uncommon expression, making the most of the very fine music.

Karl Böhm and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra provide accompaniments that actually shimmer—as they are intended to—for Strauss was a master of the orchestral palette. London's superior recording also has a part in the magic created by the disc. At its modest price, the record can be considered as an absolute must for all lovers of the lied or for anyone interested in fine music well sung.

W.

Blow: An Ode on the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell. Russell Oberlin, Charles Bressler (counter-tenors); Bernard Krainis, John Leonard (recorders); Herman Chessid (harpsichord). One side, and **Selected Vocal and Instrumental Works of Henry Purcell.** Members of the New York Pro Musica Antiqua. 1-12" disc (*ESO-ES-519) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Why Should Men Quarrel; Two in One upon a Ground; How Pleasant is this Flowery Plain; What Can We Poor Females Do; Whilst I with Grief; When the Cock Begins to Crow; What a Sad Fate; Strike the Viol.

Esoteric Records really live up to its name with this release. John Blow, an eminent organist and Purcell's teacher, is a composer whose music has been neglected, largely due to 18th century judgments that his music was full of "crudities" and "bestialities." Such unpleasantness is certainly not apparent to 20th century ears. The *Ode on the Death of Mr. Henry Purcell* is a thoroughly lovely piece with a sincere emotional content. Of particular interest is the use of "counter tenors." Groves defines this voice as "a male alto . . . (having) a compass from about f' to c" by the use of falsetto, his natural voice being tenor or bass." Incidentally, Purcell himself is reputed to have been a fine counter-tenor although his natural voice was bass. Russell Oberlin and Charles Bressler sing beautifully and lend an air of authenticity to the carefully considered performance.

The reverse side is devoted to some of Purcell's

lighter vocal and instrumental music. The various selections listed above are all sung with a sure sense of style and genuine spirit. Miss Lamoree has a bright, flexible lyric soprano that falls easily on the ear. Her work is uniformly excellent. Russell Oberlin sings four of the items and the quality and flexibility of his alto is amazing. Of special musical interest is the cantata *How Pleasant is this Flowery Plain*, for tenor, soprano, two recorders and continuo. The words are sententious but musically the piece is a veritable gem.

Esoteric has supplied excellent recording, the texts of all the works and intelligent notes. It is probably a disc for the connoisseur but deserves a wider hearing than its limited field will obtain for it. W.

Songs of England. Jennifer Vyvyan (soprano) accompanied by Ernest Lush (piano). 1-12" disc (*L·LL-806) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Lye still my deare (Anon.—arr. Dolmetsch); Nymphs and Shepherds (Purcell); Fairest Isle (Purcell); Now is the month of maying (Morley); I will give my love an apple (Anon.—arr. Vaughan Williams); Where the bee sucks there suck I (Arne); O ravishing delight (Arne); Bobby Shaftoe (Anon.—arr. Whittaker); Cherry ripe (Anon.—arr. Lehmann); The sprig of thyme (Anon.—arr. Grainger); Sweet Polly Oliver (Anon.—arr. Britten); Foxgloves (Head); Gavotte (Howells); The new ghost (Vaughan Williams); A melancholy song (Hopkins); Love's philosophy (Quilter).

Records are getting as bad as books or movies in that one can tell very little about them by looking at the titles. Here is one simply labeled *Songs of England*, which fact is very true as far as it goes; but what is not conveyed to the average buyer or interested party is the wide range covered both historically (from Purcell to Vaughan Williams) and emotionally (from Bobby Shaftoe to Vaughan Williams setting of Fredegond Shove's mystical *The new ghost*).

Nevertheless it is all here, in as beautiful a disc as could be imagined. Miss Vyvyan has a superb voice and an ability to project the mood of the song in a manner that is completely convincing. The choice of material is a happy one, since the songs are diverse both musically and textually.

Perhaps the gem of the collection, certainly one of the most unusual, is Ralph Vaughan Williams' *The new ghost*. This song describes the arrival of a new soul in Heaven; and the music, quiet and ecstatic, is singularly appropriate. Humor is not lacking in the collection, for there is a wonderful little piece, *A melancholy song*, by Anthony Hopkins (1921—) that is delightful.

Some old favorites are also present, such as Purcell's *Nymphs and Shepherds* and *Fairest Isle*, in which Miss Vyvyan holds her own with Maggie Teyte, who recorded both numbers back in the old 78 rpm days.

The recording is most excellent and the only exception one can take to the packaging is the absence of the texts. Jenifer Vyvyan's diction is good, but there are places where the words get lost and the text would help. W.

Edith Piaf. Edith Piaf (chanteuse). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4779) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Monsieur St. Pierre; *Histoires de coeur*; *C'est toujours la même histoire*; *J'ai dansé avec l'amour*; *De l'autre côté de la rue*; *Le fanion de la légion*; *Je n'en connais pas la fin*; *Le brun et le blond*; *C'est un monsieur très distingué*; *Mon légionnaire*; *Coup de Grisou*; *L'accordéoniste*.

American Favorites. Jacqueline François (chanteuse). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4780) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *La Seine*; *Boléro*; *L'Ame des poètes*; *Mon faible coeur*; *Mélancolie*; *La mer*; *Les feuilles mortes*; *Embrasse-moi bien*; *Jezebel*; *C'est le printemps*; *Padam, padam*; *La vie en rose*.

Patachou. Patachou (chanteuse). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4778) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *J'ai rendez-vous avec vous*; *Domino*; *Tire l'aiguille*; *La légende de la nonne*; *Le bricoleur*; *Brave Margot*; *Mon homme*; *Les amoureux des bancs publics*; *Maman, papa*; *Plus bleu que tes yeux*; *La prière*; *La chasse aux papillons*.

Of the three singers listed above only one needs an introduction to American collectors of such music—Edith Piaf and Patachou are well and favorably known to record collectors from coast to coast. The present disc contains Jacqueline François' first Columbia recordings to be made available over here. Miss François is a great favorite of American visitors to Paris. She specializes in French versions of American songs and French songs that have been popular on this side of the Atlantic. Thus Columbia entitles her disc "American Favorites." We found her voice quite pleasing and her diction is so perfect that even with our very limited knowledge of French we had little difficulty in making a pretty good guess as to what the particular song was about.

George Gershwin. George Gershwin, Fred Astaire, Hildegarde, Christopher Stone, Larry Adler, Carroll Gibbons and His Orchestra. 1-10" disc (*C-AL-39) \$2.85.

CONTENTS: *The Man I Love*; *Do, Do, Do*; *My One and Only*; *'S Wonderful*; *Half of It, Dearie*, *Blues*; *Fascinating Rhythm*; *Sweet and Low Down*; *Summertime*; *Bess, You Is My Woman*; *It Ain't Necessarily So*; *I Got Plenty o' Nuttin'*; *There's a Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York*.

Shortly after George Gershwin's death in 1937, Christopher Stone, of the editorial staff of *The Gramophone*, produced this recording in England. It first appeared on 78 rpm discs and is now being made available on an LP disc. Mr. Stone, with the aid of some recordings made by Gershwin himself,

live talent consisting of Hildegarde, Larry Adler, and Carroll Gibbons and His Orchestra, and his running commentary, brought this unique recording into being. We seem to remember that it was originally arranged for one of the B.B.C. broadcasts that Mr. Stone was directing at that time. It is an important item in the realm of Gershwin recordings.

Brahms: Alto Rhapsody, Op. 53. Elisabeth Höngen (contralto), Berlin Choral Society and Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Ferdinand Leitner. One side, and **Brahms: Zigeunerlieder, Op. 103.** Elisabeth Höngen (contralto) accompanied by Michael Raucheisen (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4074) \$2.50.

Elisabeth Höngen is a new name to us. However, we found Miss Höngen's clear contralto voice very appealing. Technically she is a fine artist. She seems always to be in the spirit of the music she is singing. This is especially true of her rendition of the *Alto Rhapsody*, a performance that we found greatly to our liking.

Sullivan: The Sorcerer (complete). Soloists and Chorus of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company and the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Isidore Godfrey. 2-12" discs in album (*L-LL-885/6) \$11.90.

And now *The Sorcerer* joins London's list of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas by the D'Oyly Carte Company; Savoyards will lose no time in grabbing this one. We were especially happy to note that our fears of a production without Martyn Green were unnecessary because Peter Pratt handles the role of John Wellington Wells superbly, with diction easily as clear as that of his predecessor.

Show Biz ("from Vaude to Video"). Narrated by George Jessel. 4-7" discs in folder (øV-WOC-1011) \$5.72. 1-12" disc (*V-LOC-1011) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: Actual voices or music of Gene Austin, Ben Bernie, Fanny Brice, Eddie Cantor, Maurice Chevalier, George M. Cohan, Bing Crosby, Tommy Dorsey, Morton Downey, Jimmy Durante, Eddie Fisher, George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, Hildegarde, Helen Kane, Harry Lauder, Bea Lillie, Glenn Miller, Helen Morgan, Will Rogers, Kate Smith, Sophie Tucker, Rudy Vallee, Paul Whiteman, et al.

This recording is certainly tailor-made for the present reviewer. It covers the period from the turn of the century to the present moment—just about fifty years of "show biz." It is a little over fifty years since we saw our first vaudeville show; and thus everyone of the more than a hundred artists mentioned by George Jessel mean something to us. We think that we have seen everyone of them either in person or on TV, or we have heard their voices over the radio. We had a grand time with this disc. It brought back many pleasant memories. We certainly recommend it to all old timers who

have followed "show biz" for the last half-century. Younger fans may jump on when the first performers they remember are mentioned. Just a word of caution to the ladies—don't exclaim: "Oh! I remember that act" or "I remember when that song was all the rage." If you do, you will give away your age—better be a little hazy about some of the older tunes and performers.

Kismet (based on music of Borodin). Alfred Drake and the original Broadway Cast directed by Albert Marre. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4850) \$5.95.

There is no question but that *Kismet* is a smash Broadway hit, and thus there is little doubt that this recording, made by the original cast headed by Alfred Drake, will be one of the biggest selling records of its class. It will probably rate in popularity with *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I*.

Bach: Cantata No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen"). And **Bach: Cantata No. 208**—Sheep May Safely Graze. And **Bach: Cantata No. 68**—My Heart Ever Faithful. (Sung in German). Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (soprano) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Peter Gellhorn. One side, and **Bach: Cantata No. 82** ("Ich habe genug"). (Sung in German). Hans Hotter (baritone) with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducted by Anthony Bernard. 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4792) \$5.95.

NOTE: For review of this disc see under CHORAL.

PIANO



Horowitz 25th Anniversary Album. Actual Recording of Vladimir Horowitz's Carnegie Hall Recital, 25 February 1953, commemorating the 25th Anniversary of his American Debut. 2-12" discs in album (*V-LM-6014) \$11.44.

CONTENTS: Sonata in B-flat, Op. Posth. (Schubert); Nocturne in E minor, Op. 72 (Chopin); Scherzo No. 1 in B minor, Op. 20 (Chopin); Sonata No. 9, Op. 68 (Scriabin); Etude in B-flat minor, Op. 8, No. 7 (Scriabin); Etude in C-sharp minor, Op. 42, No. 5 (Scriabin); Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (Liszt—arr. Horowitz).

On 12 January 1928 Vladimir Horowitz made his first appearance in America. To commemorate his twenty-five years before the American public he gave a recital on the same stage (Carnegie Hall) on the evening of 25 February 1953. This recital was recorded by RCA Victor as it was given, and this pair of LP discs is the result. We must report that the RCA Victor engineers were most successful in capturing this memorable occasion—we have never heard a better recording of an actual performance. There are practically no extraneous noises. To make it more lifelike the engineers have allowed some of the applause that attended the end of each selection

to appear on the discs. To our mind the value of this is questionable. In playing these records for the first time it does give one the impression of being with the audience at the recital, but we rather feel that with repeated playings this applause at the end of each piece may begin to pall.

For his 25th Anniversary Recital, Mr. Horowitz has chosen a most interesting program, and we quite agree with Olin Downes of *The New York Times* when he said on the following day that "The concert as a whole was the manifestation of a great artist at the height of his powers."

The Piano Music of Leoš Janáček. Rudolf Firkusny (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4740) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: *On an Overgrown Path*; *In the Threshing House*; *Sonata*, October 1, 1905 ("Workman's Sonata")—The Presentiment & The Death.

We are very much pleased to see that more and more of the music of Leoš Janáček (1854-1928), the most famous and important Czech composer after Dvořák and Smetana, is being released on LP discs. This month Columbia presents three of his best known piano pieces played with a fine sense of values and a true sympathy for the music by Rudolf Firkusny. For those who would like to know something of these works, excellent notes by Nicholas Milroy will be found on the back of the record packet.

Kapell in Memoriam. William Kapell (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LM-1791) \$5.72.

CONTENTS: *Partita No. 4* in D (final "Gigue" omitted) (Bach); *Ländler Nos. 2* in B, *5* in B minor, *8* in E, *15* in F, *6* in B-flat, *7* in B-flat, *16* in F, *1* in G (Schubert); *Impromptu* in A-flat (Schubert); *Mephisto Waltz* (Liszt); *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 11* in A minor (Liszt).

The tragic death of the brilliant young pianist, William Kapell, is marked by RCA Victor with the issuance of the present disc. All of the selections, except the *Mephisto Waltz*, are "New Orthophonic" High Fidelity recordings. The *Mephisto Waltz* was one of the first recordings that Mr. Kapell made for RCA Victor. It dates from 1945. The others are among the last that this fine young artist made. In fact, he did not complete the Bach *Partita No. 4* in D; the final movement is missing.

Schubert: Sonata in G, Op. 78 ("Fantasy"). One and one-half sides, and **Schubert: (3) Klavierstücke, Op. Posth.** Henry Jolles (piano). 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-81) \$5.95.

The present disc will give American music lovers an opportunity of hearing the celebrated European interpreter of Schubert, Henry Jolles. Mr. Jolles, a student of Artur Schnabel and Edwin Fischer, is remembered for his great achievement of playing all of the piano works of Schubert at a series of concerts at the University of Heidelberg. At present

Mr. Jolles is a professor at the New Free School of Music, Sao Paulo, Brazil. However, from time to time he tours Europe and South America giving concerts that always command capacity audiences.

We found Jolles' playing thoroughly delightful and do not hesitate to urge our readers to investigate this disc.

Bartók: (8) Pieces from "Mikrokosmos." One side, and **Rorem:** Sonata No. 2. Julius Katchen (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-759) \$5.95.

Julius Katchen Recital. Julius Katchen (piano). 1-12" disc (*L-LL-824) \$5.95.

CONTENTS: Mephisto Waltz No. 1 (Liszt); Funérailles (from "Harmonies Poétiques et Religieuses"); Prelude and Fugue in E minor, Op. 35, No. 1 (Mendelssohn); Auf Flügeln des Gesanges, Op. 34, No. 2 (Mendelssohn); Scherzo in E minor, Op. 16, No. 2 (Mendelssohn); Rondo Capriccioso in E, Op. 14 (Mendelssohn).

The young American pianist, Julius Katchen, after considerable success in this country, went on to Europe where he has achieved even greater success. London has made a number of recordings of him abroad, two of them have recently been released in this country. Of particular interest is his version of eight pieces from Bartók's "Mikrokosmos." Katchen is in no way limited to the moderns. He has been equally successful with the old masters as one may judge by listening to his playing of Mendelssohn and Liszt.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Beethoven:** Sonata No. 21 in C, Op. 53 ("Waldstein").

Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4774) \$5.95. (TNR June '39 & Apr. '39).

Ravel: Gaspard de la Nuit (Ondine, LeGibet, Scarbo) (TNR Sept. '39). One-half side, and **Debussy:** Estampes (Pagodes, Soiree dans Grenade, Jardins sous la pluie) (TNR June '40). One side, and **Debussy:** Images (Books I & II) (TNR Sept. '51). Walter Gieseking (piano). 1-12" disc (*C-ML-4773) \$5.95.

The 15-year old versions of the Beethoven Sonatas still sound pretty good, if you like Gieseking's poetic touch. Gieseking is right in his element, however, on the Ravel-Debussy disc. We found it especially interesting to compare, on one disc, the recording techniques of 1939/40 with that in 1951; one can surely notice the surface noise in the transfer from 78's which is absent when making discs from tape masters.

Beethoven: Sonata No. 23 in F minor, Op. 57 ("Appassionata"). One side, and **Schubert:** Moments Musicaux, Op. 94. Edwin Fischer (piano). 1-12" disc (*V-LHMV-1055) \$5.95.

We are glad to report that the famous Edwin Fischer version of the "Appassionata" is now avail-

able on an imported HMV LP disc. Mr. Fischer's delightful performance of Schubert's *Moments Musicaux*, Op. 94 is its happy companion on this outstanding disc. Mr. Fischer's host of admirers on this side of the Atlantic will doubtless lose no time in adding this record to their libraries.

Bach: (6) French Suites. Reine Gianoli (piano). 3-12" discs in album (*WEST-WAL-307) \$18.50.

The distinguished French pianist, Reine Gianoli, a *protégé* of Alfred Cortot, has made splendid recordings of these Bach French Suites. If you prefer piano renditions of them, we suggest that you will do well to select Miss Gianoli's album. If you prefer them played on the instrument for which they were written, the harpsichord, we recommend either Fernando Valenti's recordings for Westminster (*WEST-WAL-310) or Isabelle Nef's for L'Oiseau Lyre (*OL-OLP-3).

Beethoven: Rondo in C, Op. 51, No. 1. One side, and **Beethoven:** Rondo in G, Op. 51, No. 2. Wilhelm Kempff (piano). 1-10" disc (*D-DL-4086) \$2.50.

While these little rondos are not of prime importance, those who are making a collection of LP recordings of Beethoven's music doubtless will be very glad to know that they are now available. We also think that they will be particularly pleased that they have been recorded by such an eminent Beethoven interpreter as Wilhelm Kempff.

BAND



Galops, Polkas and Potpourris. Deutschmeister Band conducted by Julius Herrmann. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3007) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Flirt Galop (Ziehrer); Muenchen-Wein, Gleicher Sinn (Komzak); Feuerfest Polka (J. Strauss); Leichtes Blut (J. Strauss); Fesche Geister (Ziehrer); Fur's Herz und Gmut (Komzak).

Austrian Folk Music. Deutschmeister Band conducted by Julius Herrmann. 1-10" disc (*WEST-WL-3009) \$3.95.

CONTENTS: Altbayrischer Ländler; Erzherzog Johann Jodler; Alte Wiener Volksmusik; Marsch Potpourri; Altsteirischer Ländler; Altbayrischer Schuhplattler.

Listen to the Band! Vox Concert Band. 1-10" disc (*VX-590) \$3.15.

CONTENTS: The Gladiators March (Fucik); Sefira, Intermezzo (Siede); Malaga (Rixner); Marriage of the Winds (Hall); The Gypsy Baron—March (J. Strauss); Deutschmeister March (Jurek); Kaiser-Friedrich March (Friedman); Hoch Heidecksburg March (Herzer); Radetzky March (J. Strauss).

By now record collectors know of the excellence of the Deutschmeister Band and there is quite a

demand for recordings by this famous Viennese organization. . . . It may be the selections that they have chosen for their disc but we do not feel that the Vox Concert Band is quite in the same class.

American Concert Band Masterpieces. Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble conducted by Frederick Fennell. 1-12" disc (*ME-MG-40006) \$5.45.

CONTENTS: *Divertimento for Band* (Persichetti); *Ballad for Band* (Gould); *George Washington Bridge—An Impression for Band* (Schuman); *Suite of Old American Dances* (Bennett); *Tunbridge Fair—Intermezzo for Band* (Piston); *Commando March* (Barber).

Frederick Fennell, the founder of the Eastman Symphonic Wind Ensemble, has chosen to give his group of players that name rather than the "Eastman Symphonic Band" because he does not wish persons to confuse his ensemble with a band whose repertory is made up largely of military marches and college anthems. During recent years American composers have realized that such organizations as the present one are capable of playing works of "outstanding craftsmanship, variety of style and expression, variety of instrumental color, to say nothing of sheer musical interest and significance."

Mr. Fennell has chosen such American compositions for the recorded concert which you will find on this unusual and very interesting LP disc. It is certainly a first in the realm of band recordings. Mercury's reproduction is high fidelity at its best.

ORGAN

Widor: Symphony for Organ No. 6 in G minor, Op. 42. Richard Ellsasser, playing the Organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum, Gloucester (Mass). 1-12" disc (*MGM-E-3065) \$4.85.

This is the first volume of a projected ten volumes to be released, which we hope will include all of the Widor symphonies for organ. In the field of organ music, the ten Widor symphonies are without parallel. They could be compared to Beethoven's nine orchestral works, except that the Widor symphonies should not be compared too closely to orchestral symphonies. An organ is a solo instrument, even though composed of many voices. These symphonies bear resemblance to orchestral symphonies mainly by their size and scope. They are actually suites, but their serious content and their magnitude place them in the class of what is popularly known as a symphony. The term "organ symphony" was invented by Widor, who wrote a long preface to the collection setting forth his intentions.

To us, the Widor organ symphonies have always been the high spot of all organ literature, excepting only the greatest works of Bach, which are of quite a different nature. We believe that if the general public heard a fraction as much of these works as they do of Bach, the organ would be an even more

popular instrument among lovers of classical music. The *Symphony No. 6* is one of the greatest of the ten. It is in five movements: Allegro, Adagio, Intermezzo, Cantabile, and Finale. The opening Allegro is one of the most glorious things in the literature, with an imposing theme of 32 bars length, and a superb working-out, the whole being spacious and impressive. Richard Ellsasser, using the large pipe organ of the John Hays Hammond Museum (no connection with the Hammond organs), offers a performance of this work that is a tour de force technically, and highly convincing from an interpretive standpoint. The reproduction is excellent, being clear and free from sizzle and rattles when the volume is built up. This is a most auspicious start of which MGM may well be proud, and we wish this venture the great success it deserves. S.

Bach: Das Orgelbüchlein (complete). Finn Videro, playing the organ in the old monastery church at Soro (Denmark). 2-12" discs in box (*HS-HSL-D) \$12.50.

CONTENTS: *Preludes 1-22.* 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-83) \$5.95.
Preludes 23-45. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-84) \$5.95.

The *Orgelbüchlein*, or *Little Organ Book* to give it its English title, consists, according to Hans David and Arthur Mendel (in their book *The Bach Reader*), of a set of organ chorales that would cover the needs of the entire church year. Bach began composing them while at Weimar, but he never quite completed them. The music was "evidently designed for use in divine service, but at the same time it was meant to show how pieces of this kind should be contrived." Very characteristic is a portion of the inscription on the title page:

Dem Höchsten Gott allein zu Ehren,
 Dem Nächsten, draus sich zu belehren.
 ("In Praise of the Almighty's Will,
 And for my Neighbor's greater Skill.")

The entire set of 45 choral-preludes (there were to be 164 originally!) have been recorded by the Haydn Society, an LP first (E. Power Biggs did them for RCA Victor in the 78 rpm days) and the choice of Finn Videro as organist proves to be the happiest that could have been made. Videro is not only an excellent musician, he is a scholar in addition, which fact lends an added luster to his performances.

Not least among the charms of these two discs (which, incidentally, may be purchased separately) is the fabulous baroque organ at the monastery at Soro, on which they are played. Built originally in 1846, it was rebuilt in 1942 and about one third of the original speaking stops were retained. A beautiful photograph of the instrument adorns the jacket of each disc.

Finn Videro supplies notes on the work and the registration used for each choral prelude is indicated. This set deserves nothing but the highest praise,

technically, musically and artistically. Certainly a must for all Bach enthusiasts and a wonderful introduction to his organ music for those who have not yet had the pleasure.

W.

MISCELLANEOUS

Masterpieces of Music before 1750. Danish soloists and Ensembles, including: Aksel Schiott (tenor); Else Brems (mezzo-soprano); Finn Videro (harp-sichord and organ); Schola Gregoriana of Copenhagen; Copenhagen Boys' and Men's Choir; Madrigal Choir of the Danish State Radio; Chamber Orchestra and Chorus of the Danish State Radio. Under the direction of Mogens Wöldike. 3-12" discs in box (*HS-HSL-B) \$18.50.

Gregorian Chant to the 16th Century. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2071) \$5.95.

The 16th and 17 Centuries. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2072) \$5.95.

The 17th and 18th Centuries. 1-12" disc (*HS-HSL-2073) \$5.95.

In 1951 W. W. Norton & Co., Inc. (New York) published *Masterpieces of Music Before 1750* by Carl Parrish and John F. Ohl. Its subtitle was "An Anthology of Musical Examples from Gregorian Chant to J. S. Bach." Mr. Parrish is Professor of Music at Vassar College and Mr. Ohl is Associate Professor of Music History and Literature at Northwestern University. After this book had proven its worth, the publishers made arrangements with The Haydn Society to supply recordings of the fifty musical examples that it contained. The present three discs listed above are the result. The price of the book is \$5.45 and the records are \$5.95 each. The book as well as the records may be purchased from the publishers of THE NEW RECORDS.

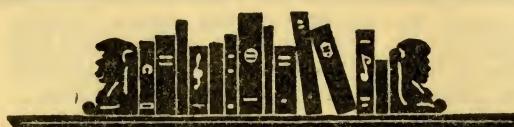
Masterpieces of Music Before 1750 is a collection of fifty musical examples that "illustrate the general course of musical style from the early Middle Ages to the middle of the 18th century." In the book each example is introduced and described with appropriate notes, and a short score is supplied "so printed as to facilitate its study at the piano by a student not able to deal readily with an open score."

As we perused the book and then turned to the records, we quickly realized that the recordings brought the book to life. At best the piano score can but suggest what this music should sound like; one must add a great deal of imagination. This is not necessary with these marvelous recordings at hand.

We believe that many music lovers will enjoy these books for the lovely music that they contain.

The first letters in the record number indicate the manufacturer: AL—Allegro, ANG—Angel, BG—Bach Guild, C—Columbia, CE—Cetra, CH—Concert Hall Society, CL—Capitol, CSM—Colosseum, CRS—Collector's Record Shop, D—Decca, DL—Dial, ESO—Esoteric, FEST—Festival, FOLK—Ethnic Folkways Library, GIOA—Gregorian Institute of America, HS—Haydn Society, L—London Gramophone, LYR—Lyricord, ME—Mercury, OC—Oceanic, OL—L'Oiseau Lyre, PE—Period, PHM—Philharmonia, PLM—Polymusic, REN—Renaissance, SOT—Sounds of Our Times, STR—Stradivari, UR—Urania, V—Victor, VAN—Vanguard, VX—Vox, and WEST—Westminster.

* indicates LP 33 1/3 rpm.
Ø indicates 45 rpm.



BOOKS OF MUSICAL INTEREST

The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music. By Francis F. Clough and G. J. Cuming. 890 pp. Sidgwick and Jackson, Ltd. (London). Price \$17.50.

The New Catalogue of Historical Records, 1898-1908/09. Compiled by Robert Bauer. 494 pp. Published in England. For sale in U. S. A. by H. Royer Smith Co. (Philadelphia). Price \$7.25.

The Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music (Third Edition). Robert H. Reid, Supervising Editor, 639 pp. Crown Publishers (New York). Price \$2.95.

The Victor Book of Operas. Revised and edited by Louis Biancolli and Robert Bagar. xxiv+596 pp. Illustrated. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Victor Book of Concertos. By Abraham Veinus. xxv + 450 pp. Simon and Schuster (New York). Price \$5.

Collectors' Guide to American Recordings, 1895-1925. By Julian Morton Moses. Foreword by Giuseppe De Luca. 200 pp. Published by the author. Price \$3.75.

I Hear You Calling Me. By Lily McCormack. 201 pp. Illustrated. The Bruce Publishing Co. (Milwaukee). Price \$3.75.

Records: 1950 Edition. By David Hall. ix + 524 + xx pps. Alfred A. Knopf (New York). Price \$6.

NOTE: All the above books have been reviewed in previous issues of *The New Records*. If your local dealer does not stock them, orders addressed to H. Royer Smith Co., Philadelphia 7, Pa., will be promptly filled. The prices quoted include postage to any point within U.S.A.